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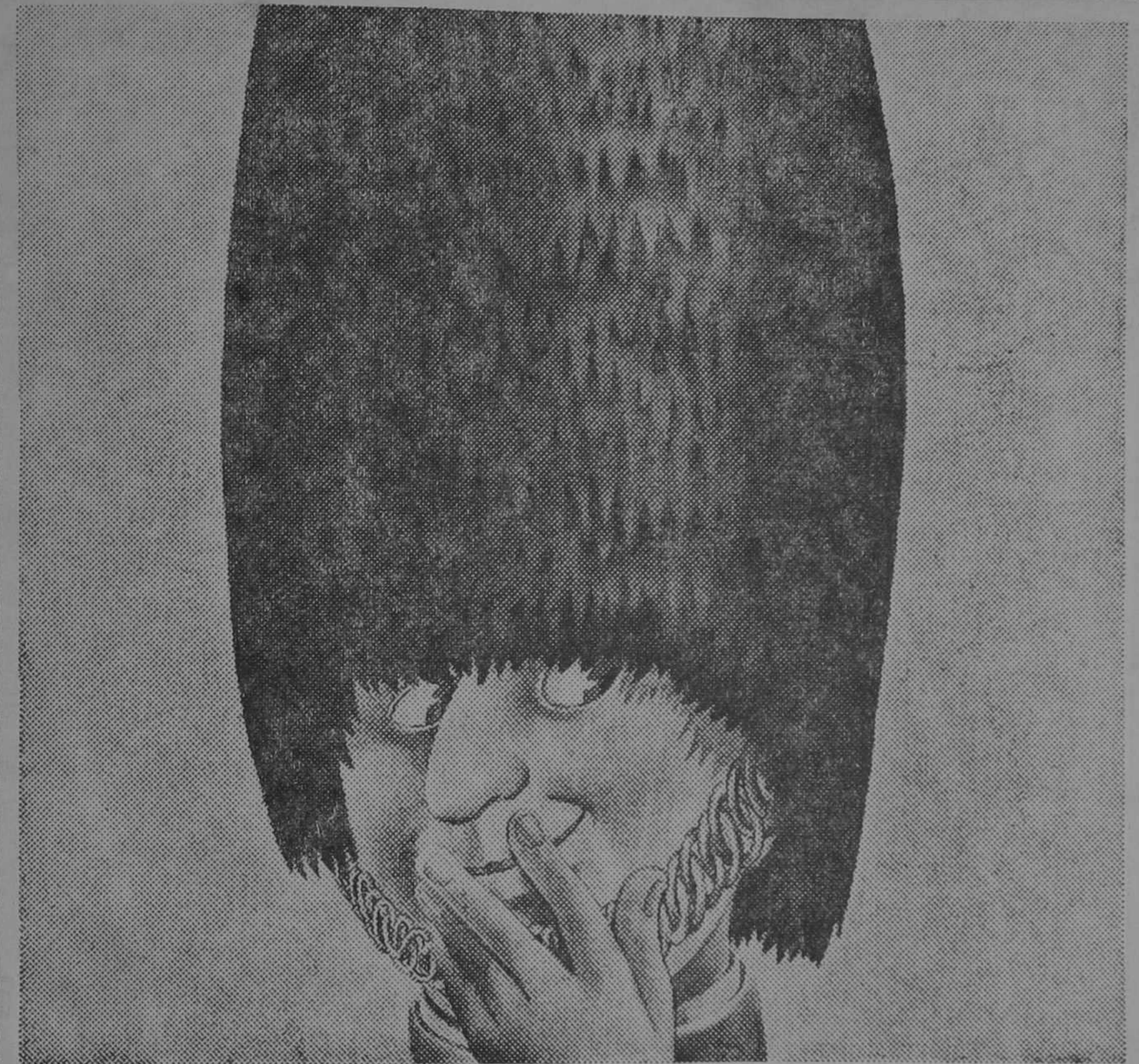
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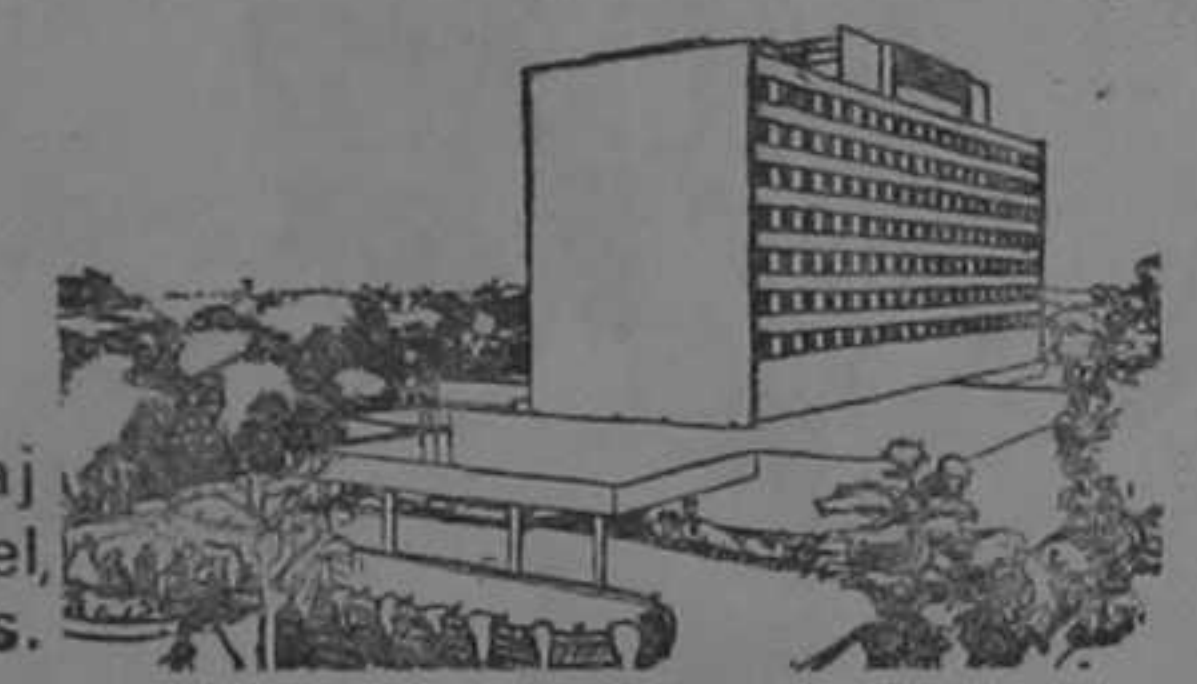
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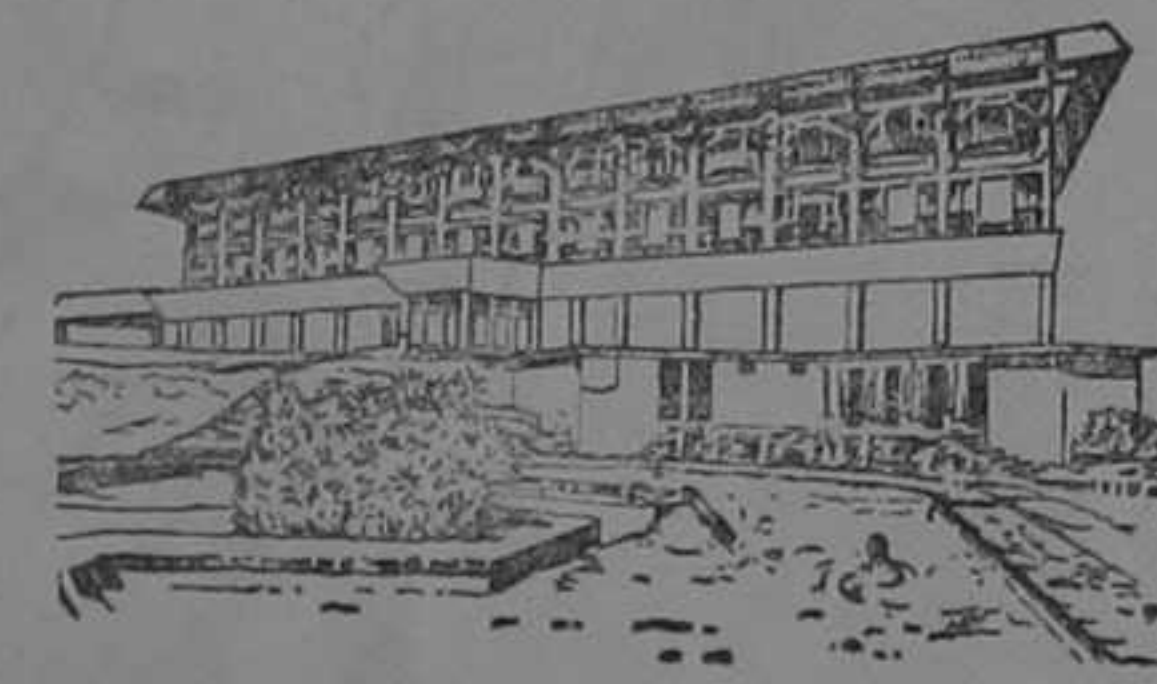
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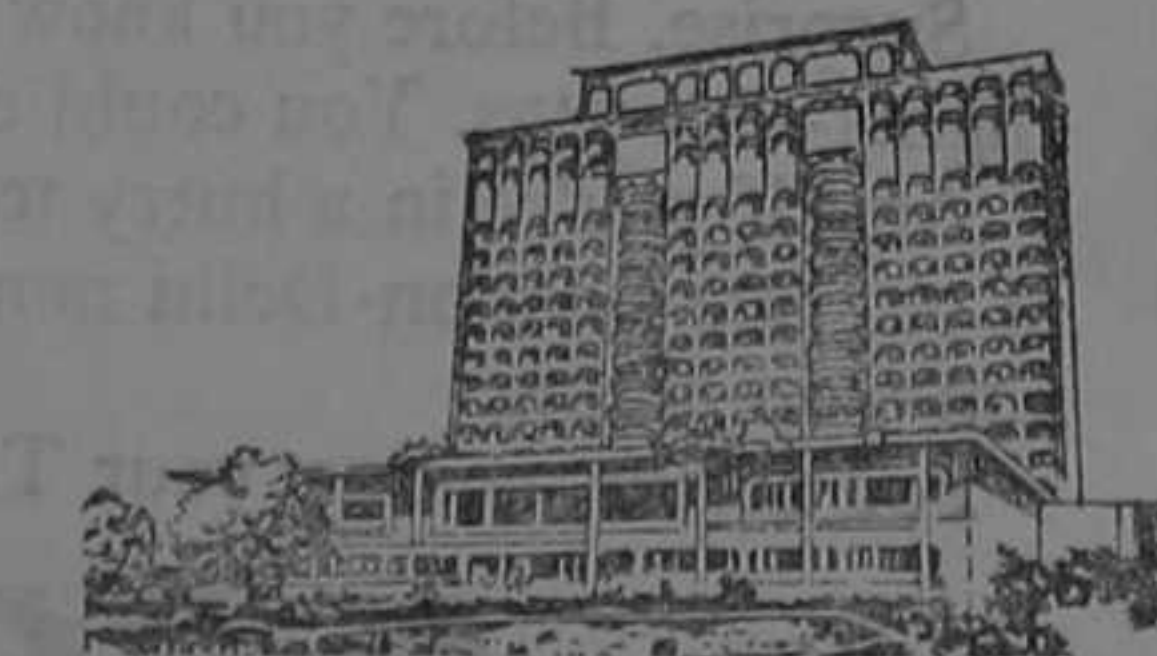
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## CONTENTS

A Study of Sri Tyagaraja	—By S. Parthasarathy	... 1
Music, The Powerful Medium of Communication	—By Prof. K. R. Balan	... 7
The Harmonium Comes Back	—By T.C. Satyanath	... 12
Saman Music	—By Dr. G.H. Tarlekar	... 17
Veena Dhanam	—By T.T. Krishnamachari	... 24
“Sangitaratnakara” of Sarngadeva	—By Dr. N. Ramanathan	... 30
Our Music Seminar in February 81	... ..	... 34
Cultural Scene—Bombay	—Dr. Sulochana Rajendran	... 37
Mighty Monument to Chowdiah	—By T.B. Narasimhachar	... 42
The Cultural Scene in Karnataka	” ”	... 46
News & Notes		... 47
ஆராதனை செய்த ஆராதனை		... 52
Typical Dhatus of Karnataka Devarnamas		... 54
Dasavathara Kriti of Sri Muthuswami Dikshitar (in Tamil)		... 55

## FRONT COVER

The picture of Sri Tyagaraja is H. V. Ramgopal's painting based on the late C. Ramanujachari's collection.

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## **A Study of Sri Tyagaraja**

BY

S. PARTHASARATHI

Raga is the essence of our music. It is preserved in the compositions of great composers. It is therefore necessary that we should try and learn these compositions *as they were originally conceived* so that we may pass on *authentic* versions of ragas to our next generation. It is wrong, in my opinion, to compare the works of the Musical Trinity beyond a limit and draw conclusions. They were all individually great, each in his own way. Comparisons cannot take us far.

Tyagaraja holds a unique place in the history of Carnatic Music. If melody is the soul of music, Tyagaraja is the soul of melody; his was a soul that had found itself. In his music not only do we find tradition but invention too. His life and art were so intimately mixed up that they cannot be studied separately. He lived what he preached. For fertility of imagination, variety, richness and grace, and insight into human nature, his songs are unsurpassed. His kritis are frequent reminders on the love of God. He appealed to everyone with the zeal of a missionary to have faith in the All-powerful Divinity that shapes our ends. He had noticed even in his day that man was losing faith in God. His words are: "Has the day come even in the first part of Kaliyuga that faith in God, bhakti to parents and Guru should be forgotten?"

Describing the lord in Vaikunta, Tyagaraja says that "He grants boons only to

those who have faith in Him". In another place he asks, "Can you let down one who has placed such implicit faith in you?" Firm faith in the Supreme Being in times of prosperity and adversity is the hall-mark of a true Bhakta.

### **SANGITA & NADA**

No study of Tyagaraja is so enchanting as his interpretation of Sangita and Nada. Internal evidence would indicate that he was an emissary of God sent to spread the gospel of Nada. He refers to this in his Todi Kritis, "Dasarate". His Kuntalavarali Kritis, "Kalinarulaku" would seem to suggest that it was an uphill task that he undertook. "What use is it to explain your "mahima" to men of Kaliyuga?" But in the Ganavaridhi kriti "Daya Joochuta" he declares: "I have performed the task assigned to me wholeheartedly, conscientiously and steadily. Now is the time for you to take me over".

*Here is enough proof of a mission assigned, undertaken and fulfilled too.* Is it not our duty then to understand what this musical missionary has told us and follow him to the best of our ability?

The supreme purpose of music is to sing the praise of God. *Tyagaraja would not dedicate a song to a man.* He says that even the Trinity (Brahma, Vishnu and Siva) were "nadopasakas" and is emphatic



when he declares that one who cannot float in the ocean of musical bliss is a mere burden in earth.

Music has a divine appeal only if it has the background of bhakti. Thus we see the significance of his Dhanyasi kriti "Sangeeta Gnanamu": "Without bhakti no music can lead us to the path of liberation". He therefore asks for "Bhakti Bhiksha" and Sathwika Bhakti too. Bhakti should also be combined with Prema. One more quality that raises bhakti to a higher level is "Nishkamyā". Bhajanapara of this type need have no fear of death, he declares. He goes further in his Mukhari Kriti "Kshinamai". "No learning, yagna or tapa will free us from rebirth. But only bhajana dedicated to God with single-minded devotion will take us on the path to realisation."

### TRANSCENDENTAL MUSIC

Nada is the transcendental music (music that cannot be heard) continuously produced in the body by means of the life process. It is the resultant effect of yagna, so to say, the holy fire (creative element) at the mooladhara (navel region) being kept alive by the sacrificial ghee (life principle) from the head region. This union or samyoga of prana and anala produces pranava nada or AUM from which the seven notes are born. Tyagaraja refers to this in his Saramati kriti, "Mokshamugalada". One who can experience the nada born at Mooladhara realises the Infinite, says Tyagaraja in "Svara raga sudharasa". The 'hridaya sthana' is the meeting place for the two essential elements. The significance of this hridaya sthana will now be clear. Kritis such as "Kshinamai", "Nama Kusuma", "Siva Siva Ena Rada", "Bhajana parulake" and "Marubalka"

urge the worship of God residing in the heart. Tyagaraja's choice of Rama as the Parabrahmam is explained by himself as the combination of the aksharas of the Siva and Madhava mantras. Perhaps there is a further secret in it. "Ra" is the Sakthibeejam and "ma" is the Siva beejam. Their union produces "Rama", what Tyagaraja describes as "Atma Rama" in his Kharaharapriya kriti "Nadachi Nadachi Joochera" wherein he indicates that Srirama resides in the heart (Atma Rama in the company of his consort Seeta, the life giving element).

Tyagaraja naturally laughs at those who cannot experience the "pranavanada" in themselves but would go about arrogantly claiming that they are experts in raga and laya. He refers to this in his Chenchu Kambhoji Kriti.

The seven svaras, Tyagaraja says, have a divine origin. They were born of the five faces of Siva, according to his Chittaranjani Kriti "Nadatanum". Nada from the nabhi produces the svaras as it goes up through the heart, throat, mouth and nose. This is explained in "Sobillu". Rama is described by Tyagaraja in the Arabhi kriti "Nadasudarasam" as Nada in human form. The Kalyani song, "Bhajana Seyave" records in the descending order the various things derived from Nada.

### NAMAROOPA

Nada is all pervasive Akasa. It is Godhead. Tyagaraja worshipped God in Nadaroupa. He found a special fascination for the name Rama. He identified Godhead with Rama whom, as he explains in several kritis, he conceived as the parabrahmam, the Supreme Being above the trimurthis, a "triguna atita", who

alone can release mortals from the cycle of births and deaths. He dedicates his Saurashtra Mangalam to this nama roopa. *Nama is heard while roopa is seen.* What a grand conception of Nada? The Lord of the Seven Hills (Tirupati) is referred to as the sthulic symbol of nada in the kriti "Samajavaragamana". Over the flight of steps (seven svaras) the Paramatma is seated as a beacon light. Srirangam, the temple of seven prakaras around the pranava Vimana, represents the sookshmic image of nada, corresponding to the seven notes encircling the hridaya. Describing the Vaikunta in his gadyam, Tyagaraja uses the expression Saptahemaprakara" and Srirangam is "Bhoologa Vaikunta". With such a conception of nada, Tyagaraja could not be expected to use sangita to sing the praise of a mortal being.

### KALEIDOSCOPIIC VARIETY

Tyagaraja's compositions offer a variety of musical fare. It is not correct to say that they are all of the lyrical type. His "Sri Raghuvara Aprameya" in Kambhoji is a svarajati in form while "Saadinchine" in Arabhi looks like a varnam. His Pancharatnas are epics in the five principal ghana ragas and offer examples of tana singing. Some kritis are padas in pattern and movement. Pieces like, "Girirajasuta" or "Sujana Jeevana" are simple ones which even a child can sing while "Dorakuna", "Najeevadara", "O Ranga sayee" or "Karuvelpulu" can put the mettle of an experienced singer to the test.

The uniqueness of Tyagaraja's kritis lies in their bhava without which no music can be said to appeal to one's heart. To say that a kriti is touching is to appreciate and react to the fine musical portrayal of a mood or situation. Bhava

is two-fold, sangita and sahitya. Only if one understands the purport of a kriti can he realise the music fused into it and interpret it correctly. Tyagaraja's kritis were spontaneous outpourings of a bhakta yearning to realise God and this spontaneity has invested the kritis with this excellence of bhava. The words and the music came out simultaneously. A working knowledge of Telugu, enough to understand these kritis, is not difficult to secure at all. It is a valuable advantage to get this knowledge.

### BHAKTI & BHAVA

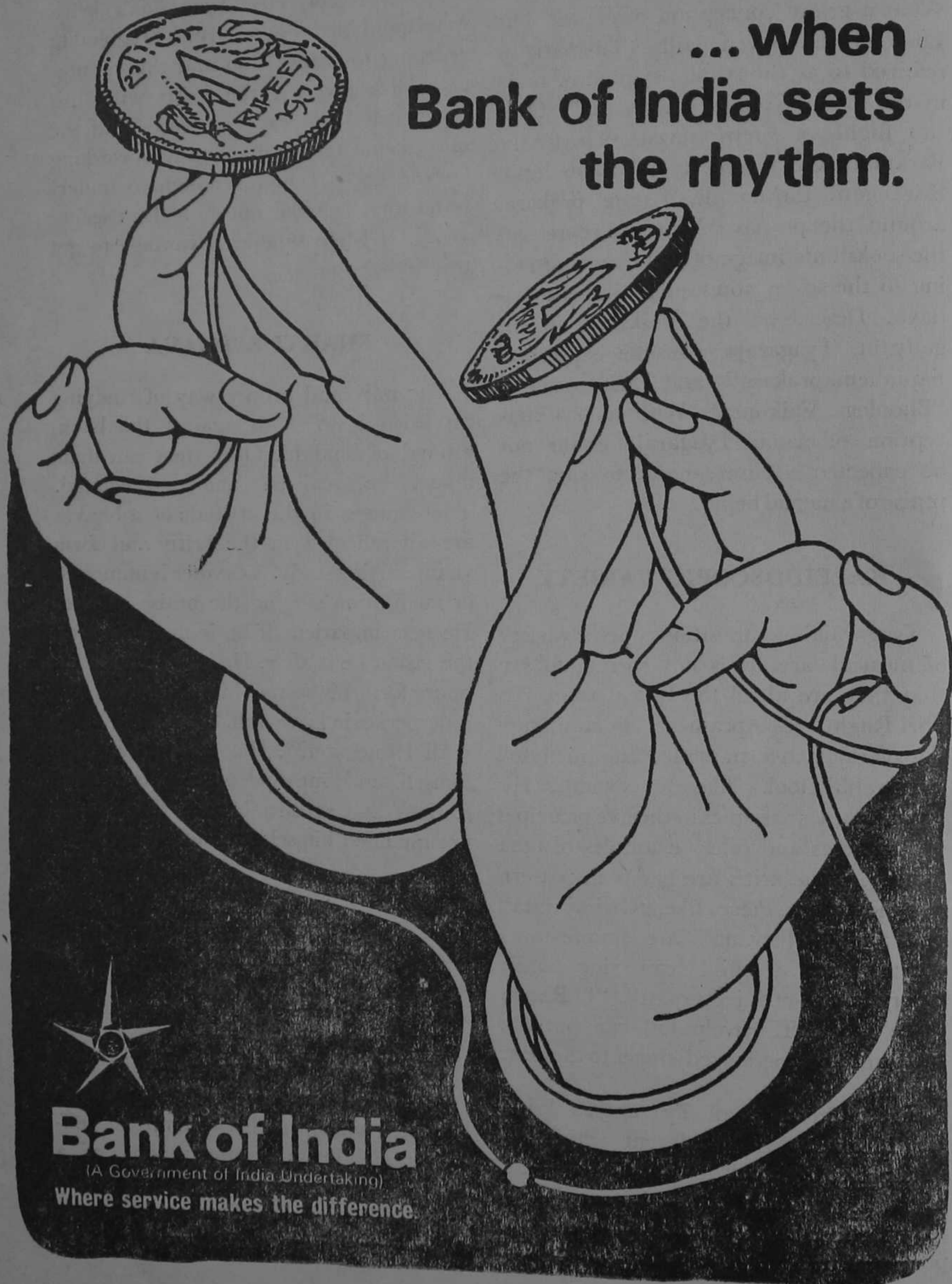
The only and proper way of studying his kritis is to do it against the background of bhakthi. Only then can their bhava be realised and appreciated. The changes in the attitude of a bhakta are all reflected in the kritis and form an interesting study. A devotee is immersed in meditation singing the praise of God. He gets impatient if he is unable to get the vision he is after. He is depressed. He pours forth his sorrow in helplessness and is desperate in his search. He cries, "where shall I find you?". He starts thinking of himself and introspects on his imperfections and satisfies himself that he has not qualified himself to reach the goal.

Suddenly, he gets a ray of hope as it were and sings and dances in joy. The vision disappears. He gets despondent again and wonders whether an imperfect being like himself can be redeemed at all. Soon he consoles himself that God is all merciful and so is bound to guide and take care of him and he goes on with redoubled vigour in his attempt at self-realisation. These subtle moods of a bhakta find a true musical setting in Tyagaraja's kritis. Our homage to Tyagaraja will be sincere and true only if we



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make an honest effort to understand this combination of bhavas and interpret them while rendering his kritis.

## THE STRUCTURE OF KRITIS

The words, the raga, the tempo, the tala and the "eduppu" have all something to do with this bhava. The Malayamarutham kriti "Manasa Etulorthune", for example, is one of introspection. Addressing the mind not be to led astray by temptations, he implores: "Can't you listen to me and follow the simple path to liberation?". The Mohana kriti "Evarura", I understand, has similarly an "eduppu" different from the one now in vogue, which is too aggressive in spirit and certainly not in tune with what the song is intended to convey, viz., "Who is there but you Rama to protect me?". The Vakulabharana kriti "Eramuni Nammithino" truly portrays despair and self-introspection. "Have I not been praying to that great Sri Rama whose exploits fill up the pages of Ramayana? Or have I not used the proper kind of flowers for my puja? Why have I not got His grace yet?".

How well Ahiri has been used by Tyagaraja to depict sorrow and despair can be vividly seen in his "Etula Kapaduthuvo" which is a cry from the heart. Chakravaka has been employed for a similar sentiment in the other kriti. "Etula Brothuvo". An illustration of an appeal to God not to deceive him is found in the Gurjari kriti "Varalanduko". "When you know that I ask only for the gift of bhakti is it fair on your part to say that I can have any boon I like?". "Nayeda Vanchena Seyakura" is another kriti with a like sentiment in a different raga "Nabhmani". Nilambari is used by Tyagaraja not only for Laali and Pav-

valimpu but also to entreat God to talk to him, ("Matadavemi"). The pace, tala and movement of "Neeke Dayaraka", also in Nilambari, are true to the sentiment: "O Rama, without your grace, will I succeed in doing anything?".

## RAGA PORTRAYAL

His kritis in Sankarabharana and Todi are so varied in bhava that one is astounded at the manner in which he has employed the same raga for different moods. "Emineramu" which has a slow tempo beginning at the madhya sthaya shadjama, implores for God's mercy, while "Evidamula" is quicker in movement and shows impatience. "Can you not somehow take me over under your protection?". "Ethuta Nilachite" expresses the liberty which only a bhakta can take with God. He asks: "What will you lose if you come and stand before me?". The same raga Sankarabharana has been used in a laali which so finely represents the swing movement. In Todi, for example. "Varidhi" has an appropriate "eduppu" in Mandarasthaya. It is a song of entreaty. Prahlada asks of the God of the Seas to find some way by which his life can be saved. "Endu Dakinado" expresses Tyagaraja's grief at the loss of his favourite idol. He sings "Where are you hiding yourself? When will I again see you?". "Kanukontini" is a song of joy. "Rarama intidaka" welcomes Rama back home. Every kriti has thus a bhava to be understood and interpreted.

## SAHITYA & BHAVA

The balanced distribution of words and the development in sangatis, where necessary, are also factors contributing to the bhava of a piece. The spirit of a kriti can be very easily spoilt by improvising



new sangatis or by incorporating the sangatis of one song into another. The tempo of a kriti also reflects the bhava. The Kharaharapriya kriti "Sowmitri Bhagyame, Bhagyamu" in praise of Lakshmana who is serving the Lord as "sesha talpa" in the role of Adishesha, sung in the vilamba kala, truly reflects the movement of the swing indicated in the kriti. Fast tempo is bound to mar it.

### KRITIS CORRUPTED

It is a pity that several kritis have got mutilated in raga or tala or both in the course of one century. The brilliant Kalyani kriti, "Sundari Nee Divya Roopamunu" has been twisted out of its original shape. When and why Shadvidamargini kriti "Gnanamosagarada" got changed to Poorvikalyani, it is difficult to say. Kritis in Adi tala (tisranadai) have been changed to rupaka tala. Plain Adi tala kritis are now rendered in tisra nadai thoroughly inappropriate to the pieces. That Tyagaraja used the Desadi tala for several kritis does not seem to be known to many for these kritis have all been converted into the plain Adi tala. Pieces in Vivadi mela ragas have been changed to other ragas which are better known. Naganandhini has thus been changed to Harikambhoji by some and to Sankarabharanam by others. Jamkharadhwani, and along with it Chittaranjini, have become Kharaharapriya and its janya.

While this kind of liberty is being taken with Tyagaraja's kritis known to us, there is on the other side an attempt to reconstruct some of the unknown ones by setting them to music. I cannot conceive of a greater disservice to Tyagaraja than to improvise mettu for a newly discovered kriti. I am a conservative in these matters as I think everyone should be—and must emphasise that if we are not fortunate in discovering the authentic music of a kriti, we must be content with doing *parayana* of the words alone.

### A SADHANA

Apart from the high philosophic thought contained in his compositions, the artistic grouping of words with prasa etc. make an artistic musical offering to God. Tyagaraja will stand out as a permanent beacon on the lofty purpose of Sangita. To him Sangita was a sadhana, a yogic practice. In these days of democratisation of music with the resultant lowering of standards, a closer study of Tyagaraja and his compositions can never be over-emphasised. His kritis in general, and those on Sangita in particular, require to be studied with seriousness and reverence, with a disciplined mind and singleminded devotion and faith in God.

Let us all shower flowers on Sri Rama and sing his praise so that we may all get closer to him cutting away the bonds of this earth.

## Music - The Powerful Medium of Communication

BY

Prof. K. R. BALAN\*

Communications are to society and civilization what the nervous system is to man. A good speech by a great speaker creates an indelible impression on man's mind. But music makes man and even other living creatures like cobra, cows and also plants respond. Which is because music is older than language.

Yes, music is as old as man and as young and melodious as the new-born baby's whimpering to its mother. Music is another nature to man surrounded by Nature's manifestations in one form or another. A class of poets has waxed eloquent over Nature making music through song birds like the Koil, the Thrush and the Nightingale; the wind whispering through laden trees and Pregnant fields, the tinkling of rivulets cadence of rivers.

### MUSIC, THE BASE

Ancient Egyptians considered music as "divine" and believed that the world was created out of music. Mexican folklore Tezcatlipoca is said to have stolen music from the Sun God and brought it down to the Earth, just as Prometheus brought fire from heaven. Treatises on 'Vedas' discover that Sama Veda is the repository of music. The mighty king Ravana of the Ramayana epic is

said to have acquired great physical power from Lord Shiva whom he had pleased by playing Sama Veda on his Veena. Saints like Thyagabrahmam,, Tulsidas, Kabir, Chaitanya and a host of such men besides women like Meerabai could succeed in spreading 'bhakthi'—devotion to God—and elevate mankind by their musical compositions. The early part of this century witnessed the emergence of Subrahmania Bharathi—a poet par excellence and a great freedom-fighter. He, too, had implicit faith in communicating to the masses through the medium of songs which he used to sing extempore. Bharathi's songs are so simple that even a child could understand their meaning. Yet there is abstruse philosophy in every song, explained in its simplest form.

### A WAY OF COMMUNICATION

Even today, Indian mothers sing lullaby in 'Raga Nilamburi' to put their babies to sleep. We sing while we plough, while we harvest, while we work and while we pray. Even those who beg on the streets know the efficacy of songs! There is a song for the occasion when a child is born, in Raga Sahana; while naming the child, Yadhukula-Kamboji raga is sung; on wedding day Darbar, Bhoo-palam, Bhilahari and their kindred;

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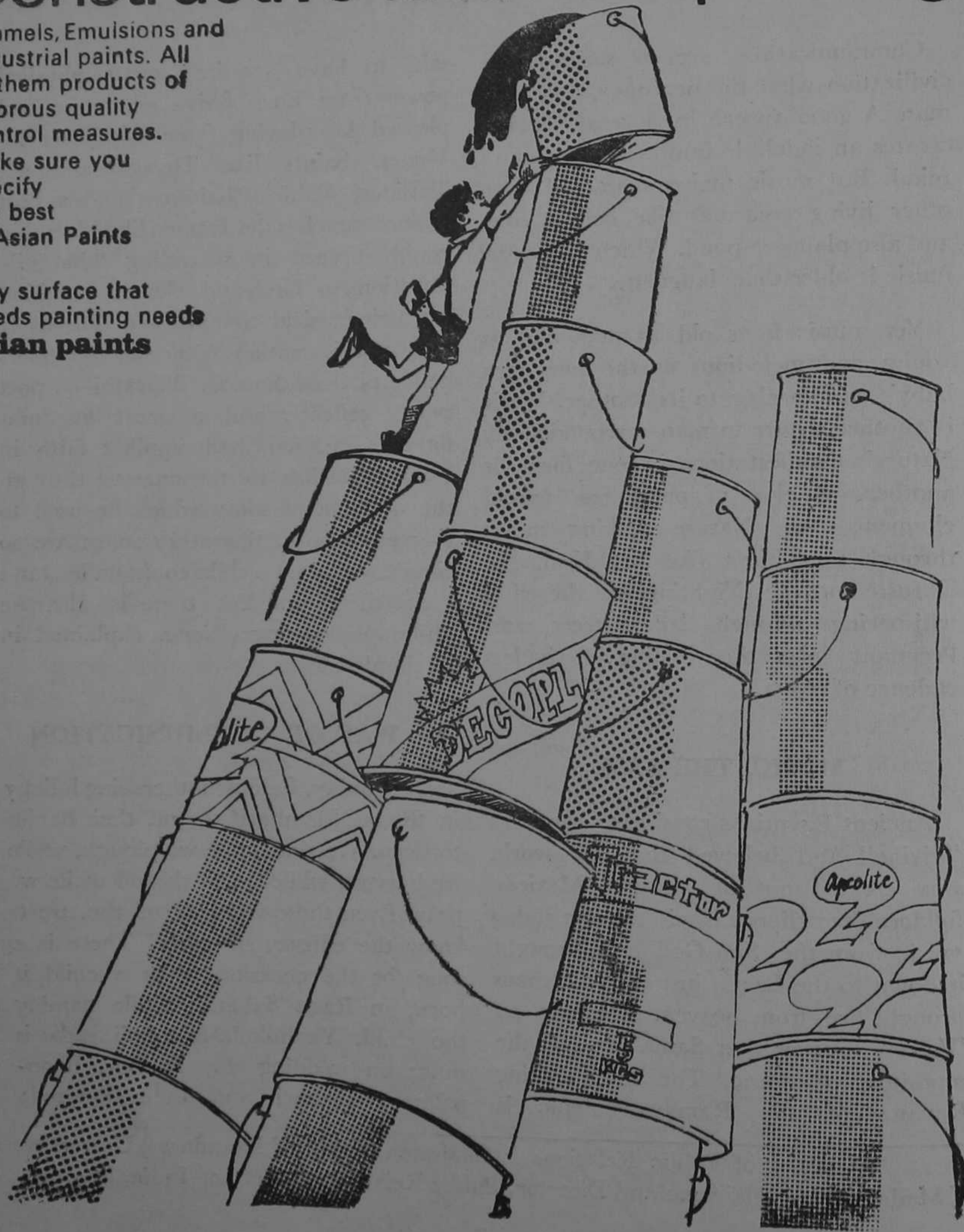


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even at death, the wailings embrace Raga Muhari. Thus, music occupies an important place at home and in schools, temples, churches, theatres, processions, and on pilgrimages. Even our present-day politicians have not failed to recognize that music is one of the powerful tools in their armoury of propaganda to 'catch votes'. All these cases lead us to the inescapable truth that music as a way of communication is a part of our life.

There is a science of music but music is not only a science. Nor is it an imitative art. It is, in my opinion, a language. Words at first were rather sung than spoken and sentences were rhythmical. The human language of speech bears the same relation to the human language of songs as the varied barking of the civilized dog to its sonorous howl. There seems little in common between the lady who plays Veena or the man at the piano and the dog who chimes in with jaws opened and nose upraised, yet each is making use of the primitive language of its race; the wild dog can only howl, the woman can sing.

## A LANGUAGE OF SOUND

Just as articulate or conventional speech has been developed into rich and varied tongues, by means of which abstract ideas and delicate emotions can be expressed in appropriate terms, so the inarticulate or musical speech—the true, the primitive language of our race—has been developed with the aid of instruments into a rich and varied language of sound in which poems can be composed. Examples: the lute, veena, viola, nagaswaram, flute, tabla etc.

When we listen to the sublime and mournful sonatas of Beethoven, when

we listen to the tender melodies of Bellini, to the Shehanai of Bismilla Khan, sitar by Ravi Shankar, violin by Yehudi Menuhin, flute by T. R. Mahalingam, we fall into a trance; the brain burns and swells; its doors fly open; the mind sweeps forth into an unknown world where all is dim, dusky, unutterably vast; gigantic ideas pass before us; we attempt to seize them, to make them our own, but they vanish like shadows in our arms. And then, as the music becomes soft and low, the mind returns and nestles to the heart; the senses are steeped in langour; the eyes fill with tears; the memories of the past take form, and a sadness permeates the soul—sweet as the sorrow of romantic youth when the real bitterness of life is yet unknown.

## SINGING ALL THE WHILE

The peasants of all countries sing in their talk. Savages resemble the people in the opera. Their conversation is of a "libretto" character; it glitters with hyperbole and metaphor, and they frequently speak in recitative, chanting or intoning, and ending every sentence in a musically sounded "O"! Often also, if a man happens to become excited in the midst of a conversation he will sing instead of speaking what he has to say. The other person also replies in song, while the company around, as if touched by a musical wave, murmur in chorus in perfect unison, clapping their hands, undulating their bodies, and perhaps breaking forth into dance!

What, then, is the secret of this power in music? And why should certain sounds from wood and wire thus touch the heart-strings to their tune? It is the voice of Nature which the great composers harness into harmony and melody. Let us



follow it downwards and downwards in her (Nature's) bosom, and there we discover music, the speech of passion, of sentiment, of emotion, and of love; there we discover the divine language in its elements—the sigh, the gasp, the melancholy moan, the plaintive note of supplication, the caressing murmur of maternal love, the cry of challenge or of triumph, the song of the lover as he serenades his mate.

### ARTISTIC EMPATHY

Musical talents are conditioned by heredity and they possess a certain basic structure, the most important components of which are a sensitive susceptibility of the mind, dynamic powers of imagination, a capacity for intuitive perceptiveness and for the projection of subjective experience. Wherever pressure of emotions and imaginative powers craves relief, it is, as it were, expressed in achievements: the work comes to life and becomes an expression of personal moods, inspirations, inclinations and passions. In the joyous devotion to the act of creation, the implement and the material seem to be mutually complementary, and the love of creation can even lead to an identification of the artistic creation with the artist's own personality. In any case emotional powers and super-personal value associations play a greater part in the development of musical talents than the achievement qualities of the intellect. The artist can "transfer to his creation in a perfect manner the strengths of his emotions and sensitivity and thus endow the dead material with his own spirit and Life". (A. Lichtwark).

Accordingly, talent develops from its own dynamism. In an intellectual climate which is agreeable, it can be widely

prosperous and with sympathetic cultivation it can be brought to a harmonious development. It can scarcely be repressed because in an aesthetic mind it always determines the personal life style (T. Chiba). With increasing maturity, musical talent draws more and more emotional areas into its sphere of influence: the imaginary world and the interests, the desire to achieve and the ability to concentrate, the fantasy and the thought. There are directional impulses which correspond to education and plasticity and where they meet the absolute values of nobility, goodness and truth, then these are endowed with the accent of beauty.

### DILIGENCE

A young person who considers himself specially to be musically gifted must be constrained to come to terms seriously and diligently with the works of genuine masters and in addition, to strive for the acquisition of a solid general education. "Genius is diligence". Musical abilities usually express themselves relatively early and distinctly. At least they can be recognised by the parents of the boy or girl or even by his or her teachers if they are dedicated to their ward. In comparison with other talents they have at their disposal an extraordinary power of self-display which can scarcely be inhibited by unfavourable circumstances. If fate and environment hinder the flowering of creative performance, then the talented, person still retains his joy in music-making and his devotion to the enjoyment of music. For the musically highly gifted person, music becomes the central value-area of his realm of experience: it cheers him, encourages him or comforts him, gives him emotional riches and educates him, all at the same time.

### ABSOLUTE MUSICAL MEMORY

Musical experience and performance assume confident ability to recognize note-intervals and differences between notes; and also grasp musical forms, melodies and harmonies. The so-called absolute musical memory (A. Wellek) is not a criterion for musical ability. Highly gifted musicians are reported who themselves claim to have no absolute musical memory. Apparently however, it is, or has been, present inherently in all people equipped with an above average musical ability. As researches with music students showed, it can be reactivated, where it has been neglected, by systematic exercise. Generally, however, the assiduous practice necessary for performance is missed and it atrophies.

### THE SCHOOL & MUSICAL TALENT

Of necessity, a musical training must accompany a basic musical ability and on this dual basis alone can an outstanding musical talent be formed. True genius will certainly also find its way without assistance and it will acquire without special stimulus a harmonic and harmonising education. The school has no understanding of talents which grow in a wild manner and a musical pupil whose achievements in the major subjects are unsatisfactory must accept the fact that he will be counted as one of the school's failures. Musical education given by the school must combat the influences of a pseudo-culture which has at its disposal rich propaganda and technical aids. Only a substantial musical education can have a compensatory and corrective effect. The population of our schools should be helped to learn to love music and also to be receptive to it with a trained taste

and to experience it as an existential value. The musical talents in the schools do not only lend valuable assistance to this musical education: they are the qualified bearers of new musical culture.

### A KINDRED SPIRIT

The maturing youth engrossed in music is no longer content merely to achieve sympathetic understanding of a work of art. He wholeheartedly takes part in the act of experience and seeks to transform his experiences into a value-power of his inner world. *He feels a kindred spirit with the artist who through his work gives him a piece of himself.* But it can also be that he does not immediately understand the language of the artist and that he has to seek help in the understanding derived from the education he receives at school. Then he orientates his judgement in his knowledge of the rules of style and form, of directions of taste or traditional and modern conceptions. The untalented youth simply goes along with public opinion. A genuine talent is able to bring greater assets into play—his capacity for inner communion and for sharing experience, his education and cultivation and the reliance on the aesthetic judgement. He understands also that an original mind detaches itself from fashion and tradition: for, *it actually seeks its own ways.*

### SELF-PERFECTION

It is the task of musical education to activate both recognized talent and also intellectual ability and to make both sources of the power available for use in the process of personal self-perfection. The efficient music college of our time values outstanding musical achievements for the



additional reason that they constitute a counter balance against the commercial and technical materialisation of life and it expects a student who has been hereditarily gifted with musical talent to make the best possible use of it.

To sum up, present-day society urgently needs gifted, educated, development inclined musicians and percussionists, who are keen to achieve and from whom its leaders will emerge in due course.

## The Harmonium comes back

BY

T. C. SATYANATH

'Wagner's music is better than it sounds', a wag once said. Some 40 odd years ago, the powers that be at the All India Radio must have felt precisely that about the harmonium. For it was banned, banished from use in all broadcasts. Although the reason given for this summary dismissal was its unsuitability to classical Indian music, I suspect that there must have been others just under the surface—nationalistic fervour against anything non-swadeshi? Bigotry? Xenophobia? (The most mundane reason I can think of is that the harmonium-makers did not have an effective lobby in New Delhi.) Apart from an odd article in some journal supporting this decision or a cartoon (one cartoon I remember is that of a helpless harmonium held up by its side-handles shaped like the human ears and about to be thrown out of the studios by a couple of AIR staff members) the whole thing appears to have been forgotten soon.

Today, if such a decision had been taken, there would have been much song and dance about (around) it, and perhaps some incendiarism and a few riots thrown in for good measure.

Some months ago, the all India Radio, with a subtlety (not noticeable in the sudden changes of pitch in the recorded National Programmes of music in mid-concert every Saturday night) quietly allowed the harmonium to be used, first in outdoor broadcasts, then by artists having AIR'S A-Class ratings, and recently, by anyone of any rating.

### ITS ANTECEDENTS

There are certain aspects about the harmonium and its antecedents which have struck me as arcane. I shall deal in this article with some of these briefly—its origins, its introduction to India, its currency while it was in limbo all these years, its triumphant return to the musical arena and its limitations as far as Indian music is concerned.

The uniqueness of the harmonium in the Indian context lies in the fact that it is the only keyboard instrument in use in music in this country. A keyboard instrument means much more than just a contrivance to produce notes which is mechanically different from others. It brings with it a whole new concept, a

whole new dimension to the codification of the notes or swaras. Originally, the Pythagorean system was the tuning of a series of perfect fifths as C - G (Sa - pa if C is Sa), G - D (pa - ri), D - A (ri - dha), A - E (dha - ga) until C was reached again; but that resulting C would be slightly higher. Western music has developed technically and its technique and idiom have been standardised. As a result it is possible today to reproduce the music of great composers of the last two to three hundred years exactly as they composed it.

### KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

Another advantage of Keyboard instruments is that they allow the player to sound as many notes as the number of fingers on his hands either simultaneously, or in quick succession. This potential has made Keyboard instruments popular with composers, so that compositions for these instruments, with the exception of the harmonium and accordion, are much greater than for any other type of instruments.

The Keyboard instruments family consists of the Organ, Piano, Spinet, Clavichord, Harpsichord, Harmonium and the Accordion, the Moog Synthesiser etc. The principle is that by pressing a key, a player allows air to go through pipes (Organ) or, by making a small metal piece strike a string (Clavichord), or causing a quill to pluck a string (Harpsichord and Spinet) or making a hammer strike a string (Piano).

The earliest of the Keyboard instruments was the Organ which was used by the Romans as early as the first century A.D. Some time in the twelfth century, keys were used to open the valves which

let air into the Organ Pipes. Before this, sliders had to be pushed or pulled by hand in order to make the opening smaller or larger to get the notes.

### ORGAN KEYBOARDS

Early Organ Keyboards were small and all the keys were of the same colour. As the keyboard grew larger in the fourteenth century, the black and white arrangement of keys was invented. For several hundred years, keyboards had black keys and white in an arrangement which was the complete obverse of today's keyboards.

The colours of keys (white for naturals and black for sharps) became standardised much later around 1800, depending on fashion or on the relative cost of ivory and ebony. Flemish instruments had bone naturals and black sharps by 1580; English instruments generally had either brown wood naturals and black sharps, or ebony naturals and ivory sharps until about 1720, and also the French and German instruments until the 1790s.

The harmonium is a 'free-reed' keyboard instrument which works on the principle that when wind is supplied by foot-operated bellows through an air reservoir causing metal reeds over slots to vibrate, sound is produced. The size of the reed determines the shruti.

### PHYSHARMONICA

The earliest instrument similar to the harmonium was invented in 1818 by Anton Haeckl in Vienna. He called his invention 'Physharmonica' and was inspired by the Chinese mouth organ the Sheng, which had earlier reached Russia around 1770 and aroused the interest of



certain physicists and musicians. The Sheng does not exist any more. It had 17 reeds of different sizes fixed into an air chamber. The player had to blow on these reeds to produce the required notes and was the inspiration for Alexandre Debain to invent the harmonium in 1840 in Paris. A decade or so later, Victor Mustel in Paris and Jacob Estey in the United States made certain improvements on it.

The harmonium became a popular church and household instrument until the electronic organ outdated it from the market after the 1930s. There are compositions for the instrument which include works by Cesar Franck and Louis Vierne and a quartet for two violins, cello, and harmonium by Anton Dvorak.

#### OTHER KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

The Melodeon (American Organ) is also a keyboard instrument sounded by the vibration of free reeds by wind, and is a U.S. development of the harmonium but it differs from it in one main respect; the foot-operated bellows induce air past the reeds by suction rather than by direct pressure.

A question naturally asked is, how is the Accordion different from a harmonium? In the case of the accordion, the sound is produced in much the same way as the harmonium. Air is forced through channels, each of which is partly blocked by a metal tongue or the reed. Each reed is fixed at one end only and it vibrates to produce a tone. In the harmonium, the air-flow is produced by bellows worked with pedals or by hand but in the accordion (sometimes known as the "squeezebox"), air is supplied by bellows

in the middle of the instrument. The bellows are held between two end-boards that have keys or buttons. The end-board played with the right hand is fixed, but the one worked by the left hand is free to compress and distend the bellows. The player's right hand plays the melody on a keyboard similar to that of a harmonium. The fingers of his left hand work small buttons or studs, each of which will sound a chord of three or four tones when pushed down. In its basic form, the accordion was invented in Berlin in the 1820's by Friedrich Buschmann.

The Concertina, which has hexagonal endboards, is a small relative of the accordion and was an innovation by the English physicist Sir Charles Wheatstone in 1829 (of 'Wheatstone Bridge' fame).

#### INTERVALS

On a Western musical keyboard, within a space of 7 white keys or octaves, there are 5 black keys too, which cover the 12 notes. These notes which are of equal intervals or vibrations per second have been calibrated. Note C, for instance, has exactly 523.3 vibrations per second. In Vienna, if you dial on telephone a particular number, you will hear a perfect A note. The A note has 435 vibrations per second. In America the A note has 440 vibrations per second, but the Boston Symphony uses 444 vibrations. However, 440 has more or less become internationally accepted as the standard A note. (There is a belief that having a slightly higher A note gives a more brilliant tone).

#### PITCH

In Indian music, a musician is at liberty to take any pitch he likes, depend-

ing on his voice, although most of the outstanding musicians adhere to the same pitch more or less throughout the entire span of their music career. (But when they get older, some musicians, it has been noticed, also lower or increase the pitch to enable them to cover the necessary span of notes). In the case of musicians on the stage when, by large, they had to sing without the aid of an amplifying system, they tend to sing in a high-pitched voice, e.g. S.G. Kittappa, Bal Gandharv. Similarly, decades ago, before the modern amplifiers increased noise pollution, tea shops played old horn-type gramophones faster than 78 r.p.m., in almost super-human speed, and women in 'drama-records' often sounded like a cackle of Donald Ducks. The motive was to increase the volume of the sound to attract the unwary passer-by.

#### IT COMES

It is not known when the harmonium actually came to India. But it is reasonable to assume that the foot-organ came first when the Christian missionaries started using them in the churches. In due course, when they went about the country-side on their proselytising peregrinations, they must have found the portable character of the hand-operated harmonium useful. Prior to the World War II, one could still see the odd missionaries in public places with the harmonium slung around their shoulders, singing religious songs in front of little knots of people who would gather around.

#### THE BAN & AFTER

During these four decades or more, when the harmonium was in the limbo, the Sarangi was the main instrument for

accompaniment in the North, while in the South the violin continued to hold sway and in any case the harmonium has never been a serious contender.

The technical reason, and a plausible one, for banning the harmonium was that it was not suitable for classical Indian music, because it could not, by the very nature of its construction, produce the essential *glissandos* or the *meends* or the *gamakas*.

But if technical drawbacks were the reason for the ban, why was the ban lifted when the structure of the instrument remained unaltered? Which is what makes the whole affair inscrutable.

#### POPULAR ON STAGE

Never-the-less, during the years when the harmonium was off the AIR, it was very much in use in private soirees and of course, on the stage. The probable reason for its popularity on the stage may have been that it was the only instrument that was loud enough to reach an audience of several hundreds. On the Marathi stage in particular, it reigned supreme and because of the popularity of the instrument, produced some virtuoso artists too, like the great Govindrao Tembe who was a close friend of Miyan Khan and Alladiya Khan and the main inspiration and perhaps, the mentor of the great Bal Gandharv. Govindrao Tembe even made some modifications to the harmonium to make it less unsuitable for requirements of Indian music.

The harmonium did not lose its popularity in Bengal either. It is possible that the compositions of Tagore and Atul



Prasad and Nazrul Islam permitted the use of the harmonium because their music, while being melodious and light-classical, was free from too many complicated technical nuances. The Bengali ambivalence was also evident in the popularity of another alien instrument, the guitar.

### THE SARANGI

During this period, singers of *ghazals* and *qawwalis* in the North, preferred the harmonium for accompaniment but they did not dispense with the sarangi altogether. But then the question that naturally comes to one's mind is: why is it that, despite the virtual monopoly enjoyed by the sarangi for over forty years when the harmonium was in exile, North Indian music produced only one top-class soloist viz. Pandit Ramnarain? No doubt, names of outstanding accompanists like Ghulam Sabir, Sagiruddin Khan and Gopal Misra come to mind. The only other soloist of repute, whom I have not mentioned along with Ramnarain, is the peerless Ustad Bundu Khan; he was in Pakistan after the partition, when he was already a septuagenarian. Over the same period, Carnatic music could boast of at least half-a-dozen virtuoso violinists at any given time.

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### A USEFUL ROLE

The harmonium admittedly has a useful role to play, particularly when it comes to teaching vocal music to a novice. The teacher can explain and the pupil can understand the correlation between the notes. He can specify the notes that the pupil can then sing. He can demonstrate the notes with greater accuracy on a well-tempered harmonium, especially if he happens, not uncommonly, to be a good teacher but a poor vocalist. This utility of the harmonium was obviously recognised by frenetic parents of nubile daughters who were given a crash course in music, with the harmonium playing more than a supporting role in their efforts to get the nod of approval from the prospective bridegroom as and when he turned up. These girls may or may not have persevered with the music after their marriage, but devotees of music may be excused for concluding that the music instilled in these girls perhaps prevented them from “treasons, stratagems and spoils”.

And who can forget the stabs of nostalgia when one recalls that last scene in “Street Singer”, in which the immortal Saigal walks into the distant horizon, playing the harmonium and singing that equally immortal composition of Wajid Ali Shah, “Babul Mora Naiher...”.

## Saman Music

BY

Dr. G. H. TARLEKAR\*

### SAMA VEDA—TWO PARTS

The word *sāman* occurs in the Rgveda in the sense of a chant that is sung by Udgatar (e.g. Rg. I 173.1; II. 43.2; VIII. 95.7 etc.). In the Atharvaveda (14.7.71), the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, the word *Sāma* is stated to be consisting of two parts, *sā* and *ama*. *Sā* stands for *ṛc* and *ama* stands for the musical notes with which the *ṛc* is sung. Thus the word *sāman* denotes the musical rendering of a *ṛc*.

From the references to *sāman* in the Rgveda, the Yajurveda and the Atharvaveda *saṁhitās*, it is evident that the chanting of *sāman* was properly known to the Vedic priests. In the very early stage, the duty of the Udgāṭṛ was not specified. *But in course of time, special knowledge of music became a necessity for the priest who sang sāmans at the time of sacrifices.* The functions of the Hotṛ (who recited the *ṛcs* from the Rgveda), the Adhvaryu (who carried out the performance of sacrifice with the *yajus* formulas) and the Udgāṭṛ who sang *sāmans* became distinguished from each other. The Sāmaveda *Samhitā* incorporated the *ṛcs* having musical notes for the three *svaras* (i.e. accents), namely Udātta (raised), anudātta (lowered) and svarita (circumflexed).

The Sāmaveda consists of two parts, *Ārcika* and *Gāna*. *Ārcika* again is divided into two parts - (a) *Pūrvārcika* and (b) *Uttārārcika*. The *ṛcs* which are the basis of individual *sāmans* are given individually in the *Pūrvārcika*, numbering 585. In the *Uttārārcika*, the *ṛcs* that are the basis of *Sāmans* sung in sacrifices are given in fixed order, in the form of *Sūktas*. The normal rule in the case of a *sāman* singer is that a *stotra* is to be fashioned out of a *sūkta*. One *ṛc* is the basis of one *sāman*. When this same *sāman* is chanted with the two other *ṛcs* of the *sūkta*, a *stotriyā* is formed. These *stotriyās* make a *stotra*. The specific number of *ṛcs* chanted like 9, 15, 17, 21, etc. forms a *stoma*. There are 400 *sūktas* in the *Uttārārcika*, the majority of which consists of three verses each. The Udgāṭṛ and his assistants first learnt the melodies from the *Pūrvārcika* and then the *stotras* from the *Uttārārcika*. In the *ekarcagāna*, the *sāman* is sung in one *ṛc* in a *stotra*. In *pragātha*, there are two *ṛcs* which are arranged into three and then sung.

There are four *gāna* texts—(i) *Grāmagyagāna* or *Veyagāna*, (ii) *Arānyagāna*, (iii) *Uhaḡāna* and (iv) *Uhya* or *Rahasyagāna*. The first two are attached to the

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Pūrvārcika and called Prakṛtigāna. Uha-gāna consists of sāmans which are employed in the stotras in sacrifices. The sāman used in the case of the first ṛc is employed in the case of the two other ṛcs of the ṛca (a group of three ṛcs). At the time of sacrifice, chanting of ṛca is employed. Uha-gāna is based on Veyagāna. Uhyagāna is based on Ārānyagāna. Uha and Uhya are attached to the Uttarārcika.

## MUSIC FOR EFFECT

In the musical rendering, some changes are effected in the form of a ṛc which are meant for the purpose of music and magical effect. They are as follows:

1. Vikāra (modification)—  
e.g. agne is changed as ogāni
2. Viśleṣaṇa (disjunction)—  
—e.g. vitaye is changed Voitoyās2i.
3. Vikarṣaṇa (protraction)—  
e.g. ye is changed as Yā 23i
4. Abhyāsa (repetition)—  
e.g. toyas 2i toyas 2i
5. Virāma (pause for the sake of gāna, though not the word-ending)  
e.g. gṛṇānoha Vyadātoyā 2i The wording is - gṛṇāno havyadātaye.
6. Stobha (the addition of syllables that are different from the ṛc)  
e.g. auhovā, hāi, hāu as etc.

The ṛc having musical notes corresponding to the three accents is marked with numbers 1, 2 and 3 denoting musical pitches. No. 1 stands for Udātta, No. 2 for Svarita and No. 3 for Anudātta. There are other details also with regard to this. In this effort, it appears that the intervals

were not fixed in the early stages and hence it was possible to have differences about the position of a musical note in the sāmān-scale.

The musical form of a ṛc (i.e. sāmān) is effected by the employment of musical notes, the syllabic modifications and the syllabic additions (stobhas). The maximum number of sāmāns based on the ṛc is sixteen.

## SAMAN-SCALE

The names of the seven notes of sāmān-music are given as kruṣṭa, Prathama, dvitya, ṛtīya, caturtha, mandra and atisvārya. From the view-point of pitch-relations, they are in descending order and hence sāmān-scale is said to be a descending scale. In this series kruṣṭa is the highest note. The identification of these notes with the popular names, ṣaḍja, ṛṣabha, etc. is seen to be made first in the Nārādīśikṣā. The names ṣaḍja etc. of the notes appear first in śikṣa works like that of Pāṇini and Nārada.

Nārādīśikṣā states that the note prathama of sāmān-singers is the madhyama of the flute, dvītiya is gāndhāra, tītiya is ṛṣabha, caturtha is ṣaḍja, Pañcama (i.e. mandra) is dhaivata, ṣaṣtha is niṣāda and saptama is pañcama. If this series is identified with the series beginning with kruṣṭa, we get the scale ma ga ri sa dha ni pa. In this kruṣṭa becomes ma. Sāmān-singers indicate the notes through gātravina, at the time of sāmān-singing. In the Kauthuma and Rānayaniya traditions, the gātravina indicates notes as follows:—Kruṣṭa is shown at the tip of the thumb and prathama at the thumb. Then gāndhāra, ṛṣabha, ṣaḍja and dhaivata are indicated by touching the tip of the thumb



to the middle part of the first, middle, ring and the little fingers respectively. Niṣāda is shown by touching the tip of the thumb to the base of the little finger. The note prathama shown by the gātravīṇā is indicated as the madhyama note by Bhāṭṭaśobhākara, the commentator of Nāradiśikṣā. Naturally some scholars understood the saman-scale starting from kruṣṭa to be pa ma ga ri sa dha ni. Abhinavagupta, while commenting on verse 33 of Chapter 29 of the Nāṭyaśāstra (Baroda ed. Vol. IV p. 89), also explains dvītiya as gāndhāra and prathama as madhyama. But Bhāṭṭaśobhākara explains kruṣṭa as the pancama which is the 7th note, the lowest in the series, as seen above in the identification of sāman svaras with those of the flute. Earlier in another place the Nāradiśikṣā gives the series as prathamā, dvītiya, tṛtiya, caturtha, mandra, kruṣṭa and atisvāryā. In this series the position of kruṣṭa is sixth, which would correspond to niṣāda. This series contradicts the position of kruṣṭa as the highest note in the series.

### SAMA GANA—3 MAIN TRADITIONS

If we try to solve the problem of sāman-scale on the basis of the present practice of sāma-gāna which is available in three main traditions or schools, namely, Jainīya, Rāṇāyāniya and Kauthuma, we find that the maximum number of notes of the scale i.e., six is employed in Kauthuma tradition of Tamilnadu. These notes are identified as ga ri sa ni dha pa. Among them ga and ni are komala and ri and dha are suddha i.e., of four śrutis. Sometimes ri is heard as approximating the komala variety. In the Rāṇāyāniya tradition of Hosakole in North Canara, we get the notes ri sa dha and pa mainly. While giving stress on ri, sometimes ma is touched. In the Tāmraparṇi tradition

of this school also ma is sometimes touched. Hence the sāman-scale in the present practice of sama gana can be identified with the notes ma ga ri sa ni dha pa of the Hindustani scale, in which ga and ni are kōmala, ri (generally) and dha as suddha and sa, ma and pa as suddha. The inverted order found in the case of dha, ni in the Nāradiśikṣā might be due to the difference of tradition. For in the Hosakole tradition we get the order sa dha while in the other traditions the order is sa ni. Perhaps, the order sa dha is earlier. In the case of gātravīṇā, the Jainīya tradition has the use of movements of the whole palm or hand to indicate the notes; e.g. downward movement indicates descent, upward movement, udgama i.e. ascent; moving the whole palm round in a circular swerve indicates two āvartas of time etc. There are 32 svarabhedas.

Abhinava explains that udatta is of 4 śrutis, anudatta of 2 śrutis and svarita of 3 śrutis. This contradicts the śikṣā view according to which ga ni are born of udatta, ri and dha of anudatta and sa, ma and pa of svarita. If udatta is high in regard to śruti values, anudatta low and svarita medium, then as per Abhinava's explanation the four-śruti notes sa, ma, pa would be udatta having maximum number of śrutis, ga and ni as anudatta having minimum number of śrutis and ri and dha svarita having the middle number of śrutis.

### SAMANS-VARYING NUMBER OF NOTES

The Puṣpasūtra states that the Kauthumas sing many sāmans with five notes, some with six notes and only two with seven notes. The sign of kruṣṭa is found in three places in the gāna-texts of the Kauthumas. This kruṣṭa note is seen to be the note which is the next immediate higher

note i.e. madhyama, or the note still higher i.e. pancama, when two sāman-singers were requested to render it. In sāman-singing there are also other subordinate notes called avantarasvaras e.g. atikrama - in it there is descent from kruṣṭa to prathama, prathama crossing dvītiya descends to tṛtiya and the like; vinata - it begins on prathama and ends on dvītiya; abhigita - it begins on dvītiya and ends on prathama, etc. The gātravīṇa positions of these avāntara svaras are also fixed.

In the Kauthuma gana-texts numbers 1 to 5 denoting the main svaras are written on the head of the syllables. Numbers 1 - 6 come in the line of the syllables in between them. They may be called grace notes or glides. The musical notes are shown by syllables like ka, ca, ṭa etc., in the texts of some śākhās.

The time durations used in sāman music are from 1/2 mātrā to 3½ mātrā—according to Mātrālakṣaṇa. The indication of laya is seen in the word Vṛtti. It is stated in the Nāradiśikṣā that the quick manner of chanting should be used while repeating, after learning from the teacher, the medium in the case of one's own study of Veda and the slow in the case of teaching pupils.

### RUPANTARA AND SVARUPA FORMS

The melodies as memorised by the students individually for the sake of their daily chanting (svādhyāya) give us the rūpāntara form. The sāman-music was to be employed mainly in sacrifices. The form of hymns as sung at the sacrifices, is the svarūpa form of sāma-gāna. For this four priests were required namely Udgātṛ, Prastotṛ, Pratiharṭṛ and Subrahmaṇya. The duty of Subrahmaṇya was specific and

not extensive. The sāman-music employed in the sacrifice has five divisions called bhaktis. These are prastāva, udgītha, pratihāra, upadrava and nidhana. The prastāva is sung by the Prastotṛ, udgītha by Udgātṛ, pratihāra by Pratiharṭṛ, upadrava by Udgātṛ and nidhana (ending) by all the three. Some authorities give seven divisions by adding hinkāra in the beginning and omkāra after prastāva. Each division has sub-divisions called parvans.

The upagātṛs (accompanying singers) chanted the syllable ho or om in mandra svara and the sacrificer chanted om in prathamāsvara. This upagāna, which provided drone continued upto nidhana. In the Mahāvratā, the wives of the sacrificer provided upagāna with the accompaniment of vīṇā. Due to the near absence of sacrifices, it is not possible in these days to get a sufficiently clear picture of the employment of sāman-music in sacrificial performance. Normally the notes in the prakṛtigāna are to be used in Uha and Uhyagāna. But sometimes the svara is to be raised or lowered. The svara—changes and other modifications to be effected in the saman-music to be employed in sacrifices are given in the Puṣpasūtra.

### BREATH-CONTROL

The divisions are to be sung normally without taking breath. If breath taking becomes necessary, it is to be taken in the midst of pāda or stobha. Breath is not to be taken in between two pādas or stobhas. In the anrukta gāna of the Gāyatrāsāman, the syllables are not uttered distinctly. In the Bahiṣpavamāna of Agniṣṭoma om is substituted in place of the syllables of the ṛc. It is called Dhūrgāna. In Rathantara sāman, the syllable bha is used in place of the syllables of the ṛc, the



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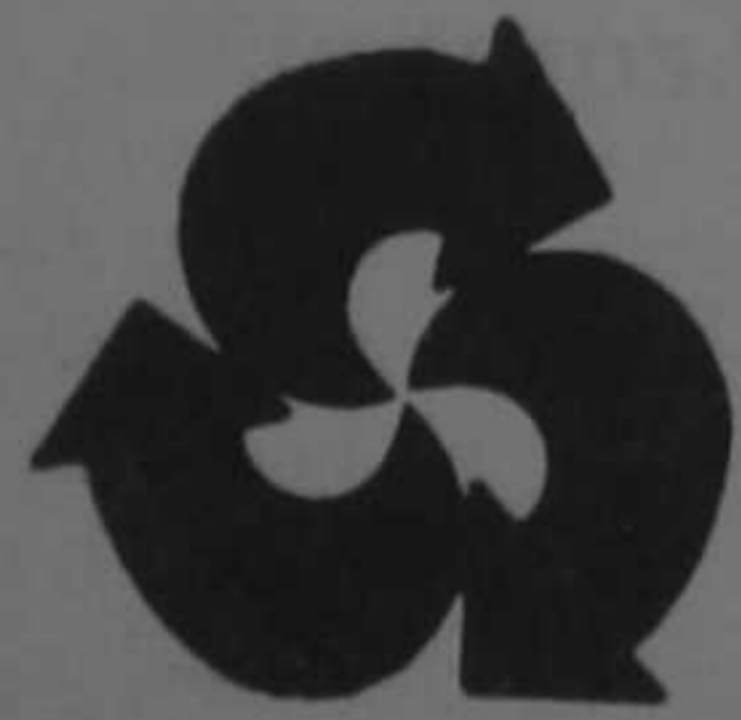
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vowels remaining unchanged. It is called Bhākārarāthantara. Though sāmān-music was mainly sacrificial still there are some sāmāns which are meant for personal gains like securing gold, lordship or victory over enemies etc.

**THREE NOTES**

From the present practice of Sāmāgāna, we find that normally there are three important notes used in all traditions. The sāmān-chanting starts with om in which the sāmān-singer adjusts the basic note. Even though the notes are indicated by the gātravīṇā as per prescription, they are not found in actual practice sometimes. The variety is created due to the different starting notes and changes in other notes. In the gāna of some traditions musical quality is seen to be lacking. Jaiminiya tradition is marked by its prominent shake (kampa). No sāmān begins with the note indicated by number 6. Late Shri Dravid of Poona has stated that the number which is seen on the first syllable of the sāmān, is to be understood as ṣaḍja and then the other notes to be employed taking this ṣaḍja as the basic note (ādhārasvara). But this statement does not tally completely with the employment of notes as found in actual practice. Similarly, the identification of some rāgas with some sāmāns appears to be based on theoretical guesswork rather than on actual practice. Theoretically, the change of pitch in the starting note would change the pitch relations of other notes which would indicate the mūrchanā concept. Sāmān as a form of music is based on the melodic movement pertaining to the

descending scale, having some sort of rhythm, without the accompaniment of instruments to indicate svāra and tāla.

**'NOT MUSIC'**

According to one Western scholar, 'the chants of Sāmaveda are no music in the modern sense of the term'. But we have to distinguish between recitation and music. Hence the employment of musical notes and some sort of rhythm are sufficient enough to have the beginning of Indian music in Sāmāgāna.

Among the gītakas belonging to Gāndharva, Sāmāgīta is described by Nānya-deva and Śārṅgadeva. It had the structure of 48 or 96 kalās (kalā is the measure of one guru i.e. 2 mātrās). Each kalā had one syllable of the text. The text employed was an arrangement of ṛcs themselves. Any metre in the group from Gāyatri to Sankṛti was to be used. Like Vaidika sāmān, there were stobhas to be employed in this gītaka made up of omkāra and hakāra. Śārṅgadeva has given the names of the divisions of it which are the names of the bhaktis in sāmāgāna. The stobhas of sāmāgīta were not the stobhas of sāmāgāna. They were the syllables like jhantum etc., uttered by Brahmadeva. This sāmāgīta appears to have been fashioned after the Vedic saman and as one scholar opines, might have originated before the seven gītakas like Madraka etc, having regular forms of tāla.—Paper presented at the Music Seminar of the Madras University held in October 1979. By courtesy of the University.



# Veena Dhanam

BY

T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI

*[In this Article by an enlightened rasika and munificent patron written as far back as 1948 one gets a glimpse of the many splendored greatness of legendary Veena Dhanammal. That discerning votary of Carnatic music, the late Mr. T.V. Subba Rao, wrote in his STUDIES IN INDIAN MUSIC that Dhanam "always presented the core, the very soul of melody, the quintessence of music..... Her music was the ecstatic outpouring of a heart that felt and a mind that knew true beauty in sense & sound...Her ideas were subtle, her touch was soft, her shading delicate, her graces elegant and her play the crown of refinement."]*

*What does this generation of music lovers know about her? Nothing at all, I am afraid. True, awareness of music and capacity for appreciating it have greatly increased. But the approach to the art is lacking in empathy as evidenced by the mechanical rendering of the great soulful ragas, Kritis, Swaras by most musicians.*

*Every flood brings its flotsam & jetsam. But to keep the stream pure, even to recall the eternal verities that Dhanam stood for so unswervingly throughout a long life may be a real service to the art. In that spirit, the following touching analysis of Dhanam's greatness, is republished—Ed.]*

Veena Dhanam's popularity during her comparatively long life was confined to the few that were lovers of Carnatic Music. The void in the musical world created by her disappearance is therefore keenly felt only by such of those few that survive her and it is no great praise to say that to them no one in the musical world has taken the place that she occupied therein, while she lived.

The reader might well ask whether it is wise to revive the memories of something that was ineffably sweet while it lasted and publicise it. That would be a valid objection. Even so it should be recognised that when we continue to feel the loss of something we considered precious it is best to externalise our feelings by putting them on paper and sharing them with others. Besides, is it not fair that those of us who knew Veena

Dhanam and have had the privilege of hearing her should tell the present generation something about her and her contributions to Carnatic Music? It is true that in this age of violent democratisation of music, when its dependence for popular attraction has shifted from mechanical aids like the microphone and the amplifier to benefit performances conducted under the auspices of Ministers and Government officials and widely advertised in the newspapers, the qualities of the music of Veena Dhanam can neither be understood nor appreciated.

## PERENNIAL PHILOSOPHY

Nevertheless, being one of those who believe that things of permanent value can only be eclipsed for a period and

not be totally destroyed, I have ventured to put down on paper some of my memories about Veena Dhanam. The rich traditions that are the background of Carnatic Music would again come to be realised at some future date, though some of us who were privileged to live through the last few decades of the glorious century of Carnatic Music have not done anything material to preserve for posterity, even a part of what we had heard and enjoyed.

## RESPECT OF MUSICIANS

I have the peculiar privilege of being able to remember Veena Dhanam almost since the time when I could remember things about me. Even then she was an institution amongst those that knew her. One of my earliest impressions was of the fact—which was then to me surprising—that the Veena Dhanam with whom I was familiar was held in high esteem by well-known and highly respected musicians. I remember during a wedding her playing consecutively for four nights, and amongst her audience were musical giants of the time like Anantharama Bhagavathar, Poochi Srinivasa Ayyangar, Thirukodikaval Krishna Aiyer, Alaganambi, not to speak of several musical connoisseurs that only a place like Kumbakonam abounded in in those days, amongst whom the most prominent I now recollect was the late Keerthanacharya C. R. Srinivasa Iyengar. A feature about those performances that I remember, which was also a distinguishing feature of her later-day performances, was the pin-drop silence, with which she had been listened to.

To say that as a Vainika, Dhanam greatly excelled her peers would be high

praise indeed. But even here, there might be room for difference of opinion. Several connoisseurs preferred a *marital type* of Veena rendering and to such, Veena Dhanam's music could have made little or no appeal. I have heard some of the best Veena players that were alive during the early years of the century including that grand veteran Veena Seshanna of Mysore, and I believe that, by and large they all recognised the pre-eminence of Dhanam in the field. They marvelled at her mastery over a comparatively smaller edition of the Veena.

## EXHAUSTIVE IMPROVISATION

But Dhanam's claims to greatness are not entirely covered by her proficiency in the limited field of Veena playing. Undoubtedly, the instrument was a means by which she expounded her knowledge over an extremely wide and varied range of music. It is acknowledged that Veena lends itself to a degree of precision and definiteness which other instruments and the human voice cannot hope to attain and Dhanam had in her time well-nigh exhausted all the possibilities for improvisation on that instrument.

My earliest impressions were that her pacing or tempo was something unique though I now know that in the rendering of pieces in Vilambakalam few could reach her perfection. Vocal musicians of the first two decades of the century never attempted to any extent singing in this kalam though the two eminent violin players of the century, Krishna Iyer and Govindasamy Pillai, both of them great admirers of Veena Dhanam, could with great effort follow in her footsteps.



## RICH REPERTOIRE

The other unique feature of Veena Dhanam was her varied repertoire. In the first two decades of the century, Saint Tyagayya's were the most popular amongst musical compositions and these kritis nearly covered most of the programmes of music performances. Here and there, a few compositions of Patnam Subramania Iyer used to be sung. It was not that the celebrated musicians of the time did not attempt composing music. They did, and some of them also used to sing one or two of their own compositions in their performances. I can remember Poochi Srinivas Iyengar singing his own compositions which have after his time been popularised by his equally eminent disciples. The Dhanakoti sisters used to include quite a number of Shyama Sastri's kritis and even a few of Dikshithar's in their programme of songs. Coimbatore Thayi indulged in a few Kshetrappa padams. But a complete range of Tyagayya's, Dikshithar's, Shyama Sastri's and Subbaroya Sastri's kritis, Kshetrappa and Subbarama Iyer's padams and Dharmapuri Subbarayar's javalis, not to speak of the compositions of several others, could only be heard in Veena Dhanam's performances.

Saint Tyagayya's kritis lend themselves to embellishment by the improvisation of several sangathis at the hands of a master, some pleasant and some less so, but all of them perfect from the strict Shastraic point of view. But I have heard it said, notably by a friend of my father, one Shri Subbarama Iyer, Vakil of Tanjore, who was ten years old when the Saint reached Samadhi, that Veena Dhanam's rendering of the Saint's kritis with the minimum of sangathis was nearest to the Saint's own method of singing.

## PADAMS AND JAVALIS

Veena Dhanam avoided multiplication of sangathis in any of her pieces. She concentrated on producing the largest number of musical effects by subtle twists in a few sangathis. I used to be particularly attracted in those days by her rendering of Padams and Javalis. It is not that I was conscious of the Sringara effects of her Kshetrappa Padams. Perhaps, as I might now seek to explain it, it was the association of the 'Krishna' background in the Moova Gopala padams that evoked an interest in those padams but the main fact that made the singing of those pleasing to hear was the tempo and the supreme melodic effect it produced. The effect of her javali singing was exactly the reverse. It produced a bouncing feeling, at any rate in a juvenile hearer. While this effect is not perhaps difficult to produce in javalis sung in ragas like Khamas, Janjuti, Kapi and Behag, Veena Dhanam could produce similar effect in other ragas like Suruti, Pharas, Ananda Bhairavi as well.

## THE BREAK—THE TURN

The second decade of the century was in a sense a breaking away period from the past. The golden age of Carnatic music was well-nigh over by that time. These ten years saw the eclipse, and in many cases the disappearance of the older savants. Violin Krishna Iyer was the first to pass away. He was in his field as unique as Veena Dhanam. New stars like Ariyakudi Ramanuja Aiyengar, and Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, made their appearance. But the old and the new were alike eclipsed by a meteor in Pushpavanam. The timbre and reach of his voice held the imagination of the then

rising new class of musical enthusiasts, drawn mainly from the student population. But he went as he came well before the end of the decade.

The next decade saw the emergence of a number of musical Sabhas, and with them a greater field of activity for the music vidwans and a considerable raising of their status. But, in the act of providing caviar to the million, the quality of the caviar steadily deteriorated till a level was reached when the difference between the genuine article and its ersatz varieties, became indistinguishable.

## FRIDAY PILGRIMS

With the disappearance of the demand for the semi-chamber-cum-public hall type of music, the public appearances of an artist like Veena Dhanam became rarer. Want of encouragement, due mainly to the disappearance of the class from amongst which most of her admirers came, failing eyesight and the psychological effects arising out of these causes, very nearly drove Veena Dhanam into the background. A genuine friend who has now vanished into obscurity, Jalatharangam Ramaniah Chetty, kept her interest in her art alive by gathering a few friends and admirers weekly every Friday, at his house to hear Veena Dhanam. I owe to this act of Ramaniah Chetty the renewal of my association with Veena Dhanam, which provided me with the opportunity of hearing her inimitable music as often as my preoccupations would permit, till a few weeks before she passed away.

## RARE APPEARANCES

Barring a few public performances every year, specially at the annual festi-

val conducted by the Music Academy, she rarely appeared in public in those years. Her devotees went to her and listened to her in a small room in the upstairs of a house in Ramakrishnan Street, one of the most congested parts of the city. Of the older savants, Violin Govindaswami Pillai was one of her visitors, till illness and death intervened. The youngest musicians used to make it a matter of pilgrimage to visit her on Fridays. Of the elite I have seen none among these Friday pilgrims, except one constant friend, Sri S. Duraiswami Iyer, now of Pondicherry. The last years of the greatest of the musicians that the living generation has known were passed in this manner.

## AN ARISTOCRAT

In a sense Dhanam as a Vainika and as a musician reached heights of absolute perfection during the last ten years of her life. Physically she had then become frail, besides being nearly blind. She was not without the faults that beset human nature. She had a live temper and a caustic tongue. She could never tolerate the second-rate in the musician. She was an aristocrat and never believed in playing to the gallery. To her last days, few could ask her to play a particular piece. That was a privilege rigorously confined to her chosen friends. Nor would she tolerate the slightest disturbance amongst the audience.

## TREATMENT OF RAGAS

Of her special talent in her treatment of ragas a lot can be said. It always appeared as if she had a clear picture in her mind of how she was going to deal with a particular raga when she launched forth into raga alapana. As none could detect



## TYAGARAJA KRITIS

in her rendering the trace of any method of alapana pursued by her known contemporaries, we must concede that her treatment of ragas was unique, if not original. Whenever she departed from tradition in her alapana, she did so fully alive to the fact.

Yet, to the listener it appeared that the progression in an alapana, while it was simple and logical, was by its simplicity itself made so baffling as to defy the reproduction of even a single note. It would be difficult to say what were her favourite ragas. When she was in the mood, she was excellent in any raga she handled. Usually, her alapanas were not of long duration. Yet, I have heard her sing Begada for over thirty minutes, without any trace of repetition. No matter what time she took over a raga, whether it was half an hour or three minutes, she always produced a perfect and full picture of the raga.

## SWARAS

Swara manipulations while singing krithis she rarely indulged in. She positively disliked the now confirmed habit of swara singing for every krithi, whether the songster had the necessary equipment or not for the purpose. She preferred to play the set *chitta swaras* for particular krithis, which were of uniformly superb quality. In most cases the composer of the *chitta swaras* she sang was unknown. I have already referred to her dislike of the multiplication of *sangathis*. But the absence of many *sangathis* was more than compensated by the importation of some pleasing twist or turn at the various stages of *pallavi*, *anupallavi* and *charanam* in every song she sang.

Her rendering of even the better known of Tyagayya's songs had the stamp of her personality. Who could imitate her Yochana Kamalalochana in Durbar, even if he or she had heard her a dozen times? Whether it is sung in *Harikamboji* or *Karnatakabehag*, can any one of the vidwans who attempt to lay down the law in these days sing *Nenendu Vedakuthura* like her and produce the effect of giant waves rolling on? Who in these days can create the mental picture of Sree Rama in the minds of the audience that she was able to create when she sang *Ninuvina Sukhamugana* in Thodi?

## DIKSHITHAR KRITHIS

In Dikshithar's krithis, the field has been all her own and in many instances she has blazed the trail. Songs composed by an outstanding Vainika, it looks as though these were composed for Veena Dhanam to popularise. How many of Dikshithar's compositions she knew, no one knows. The most significant impression she created in the minds of her hearers while playing these pieces was that not only was she musically competent to play them, but that she was also mentally equipped for the task.

## SHYAMA SASTRI'S KRITHIS

For Shyama Sastri's krithis I have a particular partiality. In their melodic content, they reach the heights of Kshetravaya's padams and Veena Dhanam's rendering of them is in my view the sole standard by which the rendering of these compositions by others could be judged. I wonder if anybody can produce a similar effect as Dhanam did when she played those lines in the *charanam* of

*Marivere gathi* in Ananda Bhairavi "Apara Kripa Nidhi Neeve Rakshimpa".

## KSHETRAYYA'S PADAMS

The extent of her knowledge of Kshetravaya padams was not known. Intended essentially for Abhinaya, it is not easy to render these padams either through voice or the Veena. There are many that feel that if a padam is sung in an elongated manner, it is in the orthodox Dhanam style. Nothing is farther from the truth. She never played any piece in a flat long-drawn-out pace. It was the essence of her craft that she could imperceptibly change the tempo.

Who taught her all this technique, how much of it was her own improvisation, these things are all unknown. That she had learnt from many masters and that she had known many eminent musicians is a fact she had herself revealed and the enumeration of the names of those she had mentioned, would convey nothing to the reader. Besides the songs of these well-known composers her repertoire included the compositions of several lesser known ones.

## JAVALIS

In the matter of javali singing, the setting was very largely her own creation. Dharmapuri Subbarayaṅ, that composer who reeled off javalis, was her contemporary and not merely followed her about, but composed for her to play on the Veena. His admiration for her was so great that in one of his javalis in Pharas, he transposed their relative roles and described Veena Dhanam as the lover who *Vinula Kimpuga Veena Vainsune*.

## FINE CONVERSATIONALIST

Veena Dhanam was not merely a great musician, she was also an entertaining conversationalist. She kept the talk at a very high level and in doing so, revealed her profound knowledge of men and things acquired over several decades. An affectionate person, she was during the last ten years of her life anxious that her friends should hear her play as often as possible. Speaking for myself, knowing Veena Dhanam and hearing her play and sing in that pleasant voice with the faintest touch of a tremor in it, which stood her in good stead all her life, was perhaps the richest experience in a not altogether uneventful life. May her soul rest in peace—Originally Published in "SWARAJYA" Annual 1948.

## TRIBUTE FROM

Mr. S. Y. KRISHNASWAMI

I have known several musicians, good, bad and indifferent. Two amongst them, however, stand in a class apart and to say that one knew them and enjoyed their music is to proclaim a privilege that is a gift of the Gods. The late Veena Dhanam and the late Tiger Varadachariar were great artists in the strict sense of the word and if the expression 'genius' can be used to denote a quality of uniqueness that reminded one of no one else but was replete with unborrowed personal excellence, then both of them were geniuses.

But they were poles apart in their style and approach. Both of them reminded me of roses. Tiger was like a garden of roses, limitless in expanse, more and more roses as far as the eye could reach, colourful,



variegated, rich and seemingly endless. When he sang a raga, its possibilities appeared to be without limit.

Dhanam was the antithesis of this vast and expanding pattern. She had made melodic refinement into a life study, and had no use for anything except the concentrated core of a raga or song. It was also the same garden of roses, but *it had been bottled into an ounce of the purest perfume and while its fragrance extended for miles around, musical content was just an ounce.* When Tiger sang a raga for half an hour one felt that there was a great deal more to be said and that what had actually taken place was but an overture. When Dhanam sang a raga for three minutes, one felt that everything had been said and that there was nothing more in the raga that required to be expressed.

A great feature of Dhanam's music was its tranquility. It was slow in tempo, but it never dragged, and the slowness gave it a peculiar majesty, like the dignified gait of a royal elephant or a temple car. She invested her music with gamaka, the pressure

at the end of a phrase that is known as "Odukkal", the variation in volume that is necessary to build up the shape of a raga, and a fidelity to sruti that was the acme of refinement. How many times have I sat in silent enjoyment of her own innate joy, when she merely twanged the upper "Sa" on the Veena, and paused for a second or two to let the melody sink into the song as it were, before continuing? The late C. R. Srinivasa Ayyangar who took me to listen to Dhanam for the first time, when I was a college student, in the early ninetwenties, once paid her a tribute in his own way. He said "I want to stay awake when you sing, but it is so soothing, I drop off to sleep half way through".

One could become reminiscent and expatiatory in praise of these great personalities. *Much of it, however, is part of one's personal experience and it is difficult to convey in words those moments of exquisiteness when the corporal body seemed to disappear and one felt as if nothing existed except a world of sound, which enveloped one to the point of ego-extinction and left nothing but a living experience.*

## "Sangitaratnakara" of Sarngadeva\*

By Dr. N. Ramanathan,  
Dept of Music, University of Madras

"If one were to name a single text of Sangita-sastra which embodies the entire tradition (laksana, body of terms and concepts) in remarkable detail and at the same time incorporates contemporary developments, which has been constantly referred to in musical and literary texts in the subsequent centuries, which

has been commented on profusely, which has not only been looked upon with awe and reverence, but has also occasionally been the target of reproach born of frustration, which wielded great influence over later tradition, one would undoubtedly name the *Sangitaratnakara* of Sarngadeva." These words of introduction by

\* (Sanskrit text and English translation with comments and notes—Vol. I by Dr. R. K. Shringy, under the supervision of Dr. Prem Lata Sharma. Motilal Banarasidass, 1978. Rs. 100)

Dr. Sharma describe *Sangitaratnakara* effectively. In spite of being such a well known and highly acclaimed text, the *Sangitaratnakara* seems to elude full understanding. It has been said about the well known work *Kavyaprakasa*, that in spite of the numerous commentaries on it, it remains as ill understood as ever.

Kavyaprakasasya krta grhe grhe  
tika tathapi esa tathaiva durgamah  
(from the commentary of Mahesvara quoted in Sanskrit Poetics  
by S. K. De. P. 177)

This statement applies equally well to the *Sangitaratnakara*. The writers following Sarngadeva have either quoted from it verbatim or confessed that it is a closed book, while all attempts to interpret and understand the work have failed to a greater or lesser degree. Commentators on *Sangitaratnakara* who had started out with the promise that they would close the gap between the "laksana" set out in the *Ratnakara* and the "laksya" of their times have had to admit defeat in the end.

## END OF A RICH TRADITION

A text like the *Sangitaratnakara* cannot be studied in isolation since it comes at the end of a very rich tradition. The earlier works in which this tradition has been embodied, the *Natyasastra* of Bharata with the commentary by Abhinavagupta, the *Dattilam* of Dattila, the *Brhad-desi* of Matanga, the *Bharata Bhasya* of Nanyadeva, the *Manasollasa* of Somesvara, together provide the background against which alone a proper interpretation of the *Ratnakara* can be attempted. The works of Kasyapa, Kohala and others whose names are found in the available treatises seem to have been lost.

It is heartening to note that, besides consulting the commentaries *Sudhakara* of Simhabhupala and *Kalanidhi* of Kallinatha, Dr. Shringy has taken into account the earlier works in the preparation of his translation. The task of translation is often more demanding than a critical study, since it requires a thorough knowledge of the subject as well as a lot of restraints. The translator has to overcome the temptation to interpret rather than translate, and has to retain the vagueness or complexity that characterises the original.

## A FINE TRANSLATION

Dr. Shringy has successfully preserved the spirit of the original in his translation and has at the same time made clarifications, comments and explanations where he deems them necessary, and incorporated all these in footnotes which do not obstruct the flow of the work. He has also included a Commentary in which he expounds the technical aspects of the subject. He has taken great pains to provide an authentic exposition of the various concepts, but one wishes that he had relied more on the earlier works than on the commentaries for this purpose.

The book has an introduction by Dr. Prem Lata Sharma which throws light on various points such as the date and identity of the author, the general scheme and style of the work, etc. Both the Supervisor and the Translator have comprehended "Sangita" as a compound of Gita, Vadya and Nrta, as per the definition given by Sarngadeva; more information on the composite nature of Sangita would have been welcome. The term "Sangita" came to be used in the sense of music alone in later times, but what exactly it signified when it was



defined as a compound of Gita, Vadya and Nr̥tta, is not clear.

### THE METHODOLOGY

*Sangitaratnakara* consists of seven chapters and the present work, Vol. I, covers the first chapter, the Svaragatadhyaya. This chapter deals with Svāra, the tonal aspect of music. It is divided into eight sections or prakāraṇa-s, of which the first, Padarthaśāraṅgha-prakāraṇa, serves as an introduction and as a table of contents to the entire treatise. After giving an account of his genealogy and his indebtedness to earlier thinkers, Saṅga-deva enumerates the topics which he proposes to deal with in his treatise. Dr. Shringy gives a brief explanation of all the topics, revealing his familiarity with the entire text. There is, however, a minor error here. He interprets the terms "laghu" and "guru" listed in the Taladhyaya as the durations of syllables of language, whereas they actually refer to the duration of the kriya-s of Tala (P. 19).

### A LUCID TRANSLATION

The second prakāraṇa is on "pindot-patti" which is translated as the 'Genesis of the Human Embodiment'. This section is enough to deter the most determined scholar from undertaking a translation of the *Ratnakara*. Dr. Shringy has, however, succeeded in providing a lucid translation of this section, and has, moreover, included an informative and erudite commentary. His scholarship in the Vedantic, Ayurvedic and Yogic systems of thought comes to the fore in this part of the translation. Examining the reasons for including a section on "pindot-patti" in a treatise on Sangita, Dr. Shringy points out that the author was a physician in addition to being

an authority on music, and besides, he seems to have been conforming to the prevailing custom. Other contemporary writers like Saradatanaya (author of *Bhavaprakasana*) also included the subject of "pindot-patti" in their works. But the most valid reason given is that the body is the source of production of musical sound and hence an examination of its structure is proper and necessary in a treatise on music. The author has included two useful appendices, one giving parallel references to the works of Caraka and Susruta, writers on Ayurveda, and the other giving a chart illustrating the relationship of the cakrā's to music as described by the author.

### NADA, SRUTI, SVARA

The third section covers mainly the subjects of Nada, Sruti and Svāra. Dr. Shringy discusses the concept of Nada-Brahman on the basis of Kallinatha's commentary. While it is easy to see that the concept might have been inspired by the concept of Sabda-Brahman expounded by the Vyākaraṇa (Grammarians) School, one wonders if the two can be identified with each other as they have been by Dr. Shringy when he states "Nada-Brahman is also known as Sabda-Brahman." (P. 110). The phrase 'vivaksamāna' in sloka 3 of this section could be rendered more satisfactorily as 'desirous of expression (of music) rather than 'desirous of speech', although the latter translation might be more accurate in the context of a work on Sikṣā. In the same sloka as also in the next, the translator reads 'prāna' in the place of 'maruta' (See footnote 3, p. 111); again he reads 'nada' where the text is 'dhvani'. These are pardonable slips. The 'Sruti and Svāra' portions have been translated very carefully, with copious comment on the catuḥ-sarāṇa process, the twelve vikṛta svāra concept, etc. A very

objective presentation of the ancient thinking on Sruti and Svāra is found in the scholarly paper "The concept of Sruti as Related to Svāra" appended to the book.

### GRAMA, MURCCHANA, KARMA, TANA

The next section on Grama, Murcchana, Krama and Tana can tax any translator's patience, especially when it comes to reckoning the number of redundant "kutātana-s", or to the calculation of "nasta" and "uddista" in the prastāra. But clarity marks Dr. Shringy's translation and comments on this section. However, the term Grama cannot be translated as 'scale', as has been done by the author. (p. 161). The word "scale" would fit "murcchana" better. A Grama is simply a collection of svāra intervals which figure in the murcchana-s classified under it. He would have done well to bring out the distinction between the functions of "suddha murcchana-s" and "tanā-s" on the one hand and "kuta-tana-s" on the other.

In very early times, murcchana-s of the complete forms (having all the seven svāra-s in ascent and descent) and in complete forms (having one or two svāra-s omitted) seem to have been the scales which provided the melodic basis of songs. The incomplete forms were called "Suddha-tana-s". Later, they came to be mere arrangements of svāras not necessarily scalic in nature. They came to be of two types: (1) those that had regular ascent, called "krama", and (2) those that did not have regular ascent, called "kutātana". Thus, suddha tanā-s and murcchana-s were of the same nature and performed the same function while "krama" and "kuta-tana-s" were mere arrangements of svāra-s and thus different in nature and function from the murcchana-s and suddha-tana-s. The translator

has glossed over this important difference when he translates 'suddha-tanā-s' as 'specific combinational series' and 'kutātana' as 'permutational note series', leaving murcchana untranslated. The term he uses for krama is 'murcchana-series'. Since "suddha murcchana" is as different from "kuta-tana" as "suddha tana" is, the term 'combinational note series' would apply, equally well to it. And by calling krama 'murcchana series', its similarity to "kutātana-s" is obscured.

### SADARANA

A small prakāraṇa devoted to Sadharana follows next. "Sadharana", in the context of svāra, means one svāra sharing the properties of two svāra-s, occupying a middle position between two svāra-s. Kakali nishada is a "sadharana" svāra since it falls between shadja and nishada and shares in both. In the context of jati, "sadharana" means two jatis sharing something in common. Two jati-s belonging to the same grama and having the same amsa is termed "jati sadharana". Rendering "sadharana" as 'overlapping', Dr. Shringy follows up his translation passages with brief comments. There are various types of sadharana svāra-s occurring between shadja and nishada and between gandhara and madhyama. While the sadharana process may be said to result in most of the vikṛta or 'modified' svāra-s, there are some differences between sadharana svāra-s and vikṛta svāra-s. Hence the treatment of vikṛta svāra-s is found in a separate section, as Dr. Sharma has pointed out in her Introduction (P. xxxii). While the sadharana svāra-s belonged to the Grama system, the twelve vikṛtasvāra-s point to the break up of the Grama system and the emergence of a new system of classification. The sixth prakāraṇa on Varna and Alankāra is mostly descriptive and



reates of the various alankaras or svara patterns.

### JATI

The seventh prakarana is devoted to Jati. Here Dr. Shringy has done a very thorough job, making a clear division of topics and commenting exhaustively on each topic. He has explained Jati as a 'class' comprehending the characteristic features shared in common by several individual melodies, a definition which would apply to each of the eighteen jati-s. But the term 'jati' appears to have denoted each individual melody of this class too. Certain inferences made by Dr. Shringy in his commentary on this section seem to be not wholly justified: (a) He explains the mention of murcchana (dhaivatadi, Pancamadi, etc.) in the description of each jati as pertaining to the twelve tone murcchana of Nandikesvara described in *Brhaddeśi*. (b) He considers the jati songs (given in notation in *Sangitaratnakara*) to be "part and parcel of the dramatic episodes and their technique of presentation" and adds that they "contributed in terms of musical effect to the creation of aesthetic delight (rasa)". (p.303). Elsewhere, the songs have been attributed esoteric values and have been said to result in "imperceptible benefit" (adrstaphala) (p. 367).

The last section, although termed Giti-

Prakarana, begins with a description of kapala-s and kambala-s (derivatives of jatis) and the songs based on them. As in the case of the jati songs, Dr. Shringy gives the meaning of the song texts. The giti-s are related to the laya or tempo of the verbal text as well as the tala units. No earlier work contains such a detailed description of the tala-based giti-s, and Dr. Shringy has done a careful translation on the basis of the two commentaries.

### ERUDITE & OBJECTIVE

Finally, the book contains such useful guides as a detailed table of contents and Index-cum-Glossary. On the whole, the translation and commentary reveal a very sincere and painstaking effort. The approach has been scholarly and objective and the translator has not allowed himself to be misled by the prevailing misconceptions about the ancient system. The work does not remain a mere translation as the author has realised the need to make a topic-wise division of the verses and to supplement the translation with a commentary which gives a clear picture of the subject. While it is granted that no translation can serve as a substitute for the original, reliable works such as Dr. Shringy's can safely guide one to a study of the original. This work would be of help to all serious students of ancient music.

## Our Music Seminar in February '81

The Music Seminar scheduled to be held on the 14th and 15th February '81 at Bombay in Shanmukhananda Hall under the Sabha's auspices for the first time is intended to be a part of the continuing services to the public as well as to classical music that the Sabha has been rendering

all along. Our music appreciation classes and demonstrations by leading artists in the last few years have been productive of some light to the genuinely more curious of our members. The venture into this seminar is therefore a logical denouement of the Sabha's ambitious plans to

develop the public's musical culture and awareness. A large cross-section of our membership belongs to the youthful & adult category and though pop & light music may have their own charm to them, their loyalty to classical values cannot be doubted. But this is an age of reason. And young and old are keen to know the origins, the evolution and the finer points about classical music. They cannot be fobbed off with excuses of 'tradition' and 'usage' and 'convention' in defence of usages.

### THE WHY & HOW

The conventional, orthodox type of musicians are too often apt to overlook the needs of the inquiring mind and those with an insatiable, questing temperament. The latter-day controversies centering around claims of creating new ragas, the composing and singing of new kritis in Karnatak music (though innumerable compositions of the Trinity and other old masters remain still untouched) are a pointer to the musical awakening and the quickening of general interest in musicology and its function. Lest it be thought that a seminar is a wantonly speculative enterprise and likely to be a sheer waste of time and energy (as hardened cynics among professional musicians were saying for a long time), one may recall the case of the great German dramatist and poet, Goethe, who was totally unable to appreciate the music of the immortal Beethoven! But he enjoyed Kalidasa's "Shakuntalam" with delicious delight.

### THE INTELLECTUAL APPROACH

Goethe considered music as an irrational art on the ground that (to quote

Mosco Carner), "it did not lend itself to a clear, satisfying analysis by the critical, logical intellect". Goethe "even came to deny music a purpose in itself... For it to be comprehensible, it ought to serve some extra musical purpose which lay within the grasp of the intellect. The principle of *l'art pour l'art* was not known to him". To his friend & biographer, Eckermann, Goethe had admitted that "it is more through *reflection*, and therefore in a general way, than through *enjoyment*" that he approached music—an instance of the 18th century type of rationalism which placed the hegemony of pure reason above the emotive, instinctive aspects of art. Strangely enough, similar was the attitude of the great mathematician Leibniz who could only describe music as an "unconscious mathematical problem of the soul."

### CHANGE IN THE TIDE

In these days such cold logic and unemotional reason do not fortunately hold dominant sway in musical appreciation and it is generally conceded that music heightens one's artistic awareness and affords pure entertainment of a very satisfying order. However, the fact remains that analytical minds are seeking to comprehend the nature of the materials and the making of music and the parameters of its structure and appeal to listeners. For instance, computer technology is increasingly used as a tool in such analysis. ("Shanmukha" had in this behalf published articles by Dr. R. Srinivasan of the Dept. of Physics, University of Madras and by Prof. K. R. Rajagopalan of the Dept. of Statistics of the Christian College, Tambaram). New methods of scientific inquiry are being developed. An Association for the Promotion of Musicological Research has



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already been registered in Madras and is doing valuable work in this direction. UNESCO is interested in promoting such research.

The Sabha is fortunate that very eminent musicologists and musicians—the two branches are very essential for the progress of music as an art and science—have agreed to participate in the Seminar. Savants and musicians like Dr. S. Ramanathan, Prof. Ranade, Prof. R. C. Mehta, Dr. S Seetha, Shri T. S. Parthasarathy, Prof. R. Satyanarayana, Smt. Vidya Shankar, Prof. Gautam, Smt. Shakuntala

Narasimhan, are indeed names to conjure with. The public may certainly look forward to getting a great deal of enlightenment from them on the two subjects of the Seminar, viz., (1) Shruthis in Indian Music & (2) Some common aspects of the Hindustani and Karnatik systems.

The organisers of the Sabha hope that the members and the public of Bombay and adjacent centres would attend the Seminar in strength and make the occasion a really useful one for sharing musical thoughts and experiences.

EDITOR

## Cultural Scene—Bombay

BY

DR. SULOCHANA RAJENDRAN

The cultural festival season in Bombay caught up in spirit and tempo with the premier institutions, Sree Shanmukhanda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha, followed by the Bharatiya Music & Arts Society, celebrating their annual festivals of Music, Dance & Drama with usual gusto.

The conferment of the honour of State Dancer by the Tamil Nadu Govt. on Swarnamukhi was more than justified by her performance at the Shanmukhanda Sabha's annual festival in October last.

A dancer with inimitable sinuous flexions, felicity and perfect 'angasuddha,' what endeared one to Swarnamukhi was her fine sense of aesthetics and technique and the discriminate use of them. A

perfectionist in Karanas, a legacy which she has inherited from her father the late Sampathi Bhoopal, she used the technique where it belonged or fitted ideally—in the Cosmic dance of Shiva, in the 'freeze' pause following Tillana Teermanams and in the lighter numbers like Snake dance. While the 'Urdhva Tandava' of Shiva was no insignificant pose executed by a female dancer, the Snake dance was one where Swarnamukhi excelled in Karana movement which created at once awe and admiration. In the traditional numbers such as Alarippu, Jathiswaram, Varnam and Padam Swarnamukhi was as pure as any purist could conceive and rendered them with an ease matching any top-notch. It is in expression that she could gain from more performing experience.



If the only dance recital (Swarnamukhi's) in the festival had a unique flavour, the only Vocal recital by the young maestro, T.V. Sankaranarayanan, turned out to be a master-melodist's fare. And he belongs to that genre who have discovered the significance of 'Niraval' in Carnatic music and employ it with relish.

TVS's melodic sway was supreme from the very start "Vathapi" (Hamsadhvani) and found its peak in the Durbar Kriti "Neeve Nannu Brovavle". His remarkably powerfully and pliant voice-culturing came to the fore in alapanas of Kambhoji, Purvikalyani and Kharaharapriya and his instincts for rare hues, in Vishnupriya (a vivadi Janya Raga) and Suddha Hindolam (Hindolam with Chaturruti Dhaivata).

S. D. Sridhar (Violin) showed perception in the art of accompaniment and tried to emulate the vocalist. Yella Venkateswara Rao (Mridangam) played with gusto as usual.

The inaugural traditional Nagaswarm recital was by Sheikh China Maulana who has earned a place among top-notchers for his smooth flow and subdued stride.

The more popular Theatre groups from Madras, CHO's Viveka Fine Arts Club and 'Major's Ennessen Theatres with their punch and satire staged each three dramas some of which were repeats. CHO's "Judgement Reserved", a satire spun around the raging social ill of 'rape' certainly caught the eye for some superior acting by the team. The theme and skilful plotting, exposing pseudo-humanitarians, was no different from CHO's genre but the acting left an indelible impress of the team's calibre.

Of the three plays Major Sundarajan's troupe enacted, "Delhi Mamiyar" had a punch. Setting right a "head" less family that was frittering away for want of proper care and affection, the play was rather a 'feeler' for many a home torn asunder in today's world of misconceived values and priorities.

Only a few months ago, Bombay rasikas had the taste of the 'elixir' that K.V. Narayanaswamy has been serving. True, from a lilting madhyamakala classicisms to a serene nadopasana, it has been a unique achievement in KVN's musical career. And his absorption into tranquil excellence is something compelling.

Opening the 27th Annual festival of the Bharatiya in November, Narayanaswamy struck a remarkable note that sustained spiritual and classical values. Of late, KVN has settled down to a more leisurely vilamba kala enunciation, eliciting a personalised idiom by getting into the true spirit of the Sahitya in kriti rendition as well as Niraval explorations. And it is no exaggeration that the Musiri-famed "Tiruvadi Charanam", that monument in Kambhoji composed by Gopalakrishna Bharati, touched a new high of agonising ecstacy in KVN's interpretation. Certainly an experience it was. The crisp twists he gave to old-timers, "Paritanaminchita" (Bilahari) and "Ananda Natanamaduvaar" (Purvikalyani) and the deep evocation with which he sang "Mayamma" (Ahiri) and "Kotinaadulu" (Todi) bore the mark of his original style in the Ariyakudi format. The devotional fervour in the Dasar-nama, "Krishna nee" (Yemuna Kalyani) "Jagadodhdharana" (Kapi) was elevating too.

The contribution made by the top-notch accompanists, Violinist T. N.

Krishnan (This year's Sangeetha Kalanidhi-elect) and Mridangist T.K.Murthy, made it a grand slam affair.

Krishnan's evocative playing in soft tone and his bass forays added to the richness and depth while Murthy with succinct rhythmic twists added a lilting dimension.

Quite spirited was Maharajapuram Santhanam, the other Vocalist who shared the Bharatiya music wing and delved more naturally and at ease in the devotionals. Outstanding among the multi-Ragamalikas he presented was the sloka in hues with Hindustani leanings: Brindavana Saranga, Shivaranjani, Darbari Kannada and Hamsanandi. Of the solid classical phase "Enduku Peddalavale Buddhi" (Sankarabharanam) was a massive build-up. The same accompanists participated equally effectively in Santhanam's fine effort.

The dance sector was shared by the glamour queen of the tinsel world Hema Malini and a promising star with a persevering discipline, Latha Neelakandan.

Latha's grooming and her rigorous sadhaka stood her through the exacting choreography and imaginative selections. The Tyagaraja Natai Pancharatnam, "Jagadanandakaraka", Kshetragnya's "Mosamaya" (Ahiri) and the Javali "Nee Maatalemayanura" (Purvikalyani) were numbers enough to show her talent for subtle expression. And visualising Ashtapadi in subdued evocation in itself called for controlled enunciation which Latha amply possessed. It was a maiden performance for her brother Harish who gave vocal support to her mother Vijaya Neelakandan.

Hema Malini's Bharata Natyam was her familiar annual fare plus some fresh repertoire with her histrionics and charming facial flexions predominating.

The drama sector of the Bharatiya festival projected one of the theatre groups to reckon with, whose power stems from imaginative treatment of the plot, the natural acting and pleasing decor with effective musical backdrop drawn from classical systems of the world.

Sujata's "Adimaigal" and Rajendrakumar's, "Fifty-Fifty" enacted by Poornam Viswanathan and his "New Theatres" troupe tackled human psychology from two angles, one exposing man's lust for power and property and his debasing instincts to get at these; and the other laying bare the futility of genuine humanitarian gestures against the pulls of social ills. And both the plays were well received. The use of pure Carnatic Veena melody of Gayathri Ramakrishna for the former and western classical music for the latter made a superb innovation.

The other troupe which has had its impress on Bombay audience already was Mauli and Friends, who staged "Nanri, Meendum Varuga", a repeat and a new play "Oru Varisu Uruvagiradu", unfolding the generation gaps and the changing values.

\* \* \*

Among the noteworthy dance recitals during the Season were the 'Uththukkadu Ganamritham' presented at Bharatiya by Parvathi Dandapani of Nritya Geetanjali who as a child prodigy stole the hearts of the Rasikas some years ago; a recital at Shanmukhananda by Komala



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Varadan a versatile artiste with diverse interests in dance, literature and painting; and one at the Tejpal by Malti Parikh, a danseuse with a 'thrust' into more dance forms than one.

It was truly an 'anjali' that Guru Rajee Narayan had dedicated to that unique band of the 17th Century, Uththukkadu Venkata Subbiar, whose compositions were as much inspired by rhythmic impulses as by devotional and musical instincts. As such they could enrich dance repertoire while in themselves forming the major core of any music concert. Selecting those with greater poetic expressivity, Guru Rajee had choreographed them with suggestive mime and subtle evocation, interlacing them with her own rhythmic designs. And the two merged into a composite visual exposition in Parvathi's presentation, which had an innate spontaneity and relish. Her polish and indepth visualisation left a lasting impress. Commencing with that inspiring "Ananda Narthana Ganapathim" (Nattai), the repertoire glided itself through "Padmavathi Ramaram" (Purvi Kalyani), a Varnam in Abheri "Udhupala Vadha" or Krishna Leela and impressive Padams like "Gajamukhanujam" (Kedara), "Ganayami Sathatham" (Begada) "Anname" (Saama) rounding off in the Puraneermai (Senchuruti) Tillana.

Sedate artistry with a symphony of melodic cadences presented with dignity and decorum endeared Komala Varadan as one who has assimilated the nuances of the art form as well as its presentational values.

With little of that 'urge' for spectacular effects she went about her repertoire with fluent grace. In a performance

where the stamp of Vazhuvoor School was predominant, her own individuality reflected itself through expressive intensity *sans* dramatisation. Her varnam, Sivan's "Sami Nanundan Adimaiyallavo" (Nattakuranji), depicting Vipralamba Sringara and the Padam; "Poyi Rammave" (Bagheshree) portraying a Khandita Nayika, were instances of intense evocation. Her "Maya", ballet choreographed by herself to Sanskrit verses, was, however, different in milieu and mime.

The soul force of her dance presentation was H.K. Narayana's resonant vocal support. His superb modulations added a rare melodic dimension. Her performance in December at the newly constructed Tata Auditorium of the NCPA, however, could not register much for want of better acoustics.

A significant factor that one noticed in Malti Parikh's Bharata Natyam was the absence of 'Craze for Speed' so much in vogue today. The Vilamba grace in technique and expression had a charm all its own. And in an artiste who with a research bent has had 'Ventures' into different styles such as Manipuri, Kathak, Odissi, the slow-paced rendering with smooth flowing sarvalagu rhythm made a commendable communication.

The characteristic features of her present Guru Sri Kittappa Pillai of Tanjavur (she had her initial training from Nana Kasar)—the Sarvalagu intricacies and the unhurried quietitude of elaborate Sancharis were perceptible in her Yadukula-kambhoji Swarajathi "Sarojakshiro", the Ashtapadi "Pashyati Disi Disi (Desh) and the Ragamalika Sloka capturing a poignant moment in the Ramayana—Rama refusing to accept Sita for having



overstayed in another's house and her consequent agnipravesa. And the dance with dramatic impulses conveyed all this with telling effect.

\* \* \*

Though not novel, the venture that the Bhakta Rasika Ranjani Sabha, Anushakti Nagar, has made in providing "Appreciation Course" on various musical aspects and performing facets is a laudable one in that it would help Rasikas to understand and appreciate music better while educating the students on practical lines. It was a Lecture-demonstration on Mridangam by T.V. Gopalakrishnan sometime ago. And now the nuances of Violin play by M.S. Gopalakrishnan.

\* \* \*

## Mighty Monument to Chowdiah (1894-1967)

BY

T. B. NARASIMHACHAR

After the death of the three stalwarts of Mysore—Veene Seshanne, Veena Subbanna and Bidaram Krishnappa—who between them represented the cream of Mysore musical tradition during the early part of this century, it was only Chowdiah who put Mysore on the musical map of India by his extraordinary achievements. Born on 1st January 1894 in a poor family, he entered the field at a time when Thirukodikaval Krishna Iyer and Tiruchi Govindaswami Pillay ruled the roost as unchallenged masters of violin. Chowdiah took Tamil Nadu

Replying to felicitations accorded by the Bombay Tamil Sangham to the two writer-run theatre groups whose thought-provoking plays it had presented in a 6-day Drama festival, Komal Swaminathan and 'Marina' spoke on the deterioration in the theatre art, the poor quality plays which flooded the stage, hero-centred productions and so on and stressed the need for probing the core of the problem and providing corrective measures. Komal thought this would not only stimulate reformation in society but also retrieve theatre art from the morass it has fallen into.

Needless to say that their plays enstaged such as "Thanneer, Thanneer", "Chekka Maadugal", "Thanikkudithanam" "Samiyar Mamiyar" etc left a lasting impress and were much food for thought.

by storm when he first accompanied his Guru, the redoubtable Bidaram Krishnappa, in 1911. Very few know the Spartan training Chowdiah had to undergo under Bidaram.

### MATCHING VOLUME

Bidaram had a stentorian voice and the violinist used to find himself in a fix in attracting the audience. In fact in the absence of the mike, most vocalists of those early years were forced to make full-throated use of their voice, to be

heard. This set Chowdiah thinking and he experimented with the seven stringed violin by adding sympathetic strings to Panchama, Shadja and Madya pancham strings. The resonance thus created enabled Chowdiah to make himself felt and to make his mark as a violinist. No doubt, this experiment was scoffed at in the beginning but, at a full session of the Madras Music Academy, Chowdiah challenged his detractors to point to one successful concert artiste who would like to disown him as an accompanist on the ground that he was handicapped by Chowdiah's violin accompaniment.

### A FAVOURITE

Chowdiah had to contend with two other contemporary stalwarts in Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillay and K.S. Venkataramiah—the latter an heir to Tiruchi Govindaswami Pillay. Each had established a distinct style of his own and Chowdiah, hailing from Mysore, was exposed to a battery of stalwarts in the field in Tamil Nadu in Ariyakudi, Chembai, Maharajapuram, Palladam Sanjeeva Rao, Musiri, Semmangudi, G.N.B, to name only a few. Each had a distinct style and in order to carve out a niche for himself in the hearts of music lovers in the South, he had to master or adjust his playing technique to suit all these differing styles.

### SHEER GUTS

Having thus silenced his critics, Chowdiah's tryst with the seven-stringed violin continued till his death. He even experimented with a nineteen stringed violin in one of his solo concerts but saner counsels prevailed and he abandoned it. The remarkable part of his achieve-

ment is that even after the advent of the mike age, he successfully adapted its tonal out-put to suit such sensitive artistes like Maharajapuram and Madurai Mani Iyer. Chowdiah owed his success to "Guts" and lots of it. The words 'Impossible' and 'Failure' did not find a place in his vocabulary. I have heard all the above-mentioned masters pay unstinted tributes to Chowdiah's 'Pukka Vadyam' as a 'Pucca vadyam'. His accompanying Dr. M. S Subbulakshmi at the height of his career raised many an eyebrow and in fact for nearly an year he was boycotted by the male top-notchers. He even accompanied a young lady, Kum. R. Padma, at a Sabha concert in the year 1953. It was his courage of conviction that enabled him to succeed where others would have feared to tread.

### RESPECT & LOVE

Ariyakudi used to say that one who has not heard 'Chowdiah' was a 'Sevidayya (deaf man)'. G.N.B. called him 'Soundayya'—coined all to express their affection. No other violinist in the past or present strode the musical arena of the four Southern states as majestically as Chowdiah did. His physical personality also was such. His petty foibles were treated with indulgence both by the public and the musicians, where another would have been admonished severely. In fact he became a house-hold name more outside Karnataka. His friendship with the leading artistes was on such a level that one would be surprised at the liberties he could take with them. If he found the enthusiasm of the main artiste on the wane at any stage, he would warm them up and goad them into better efforts, as confessed to me by G.N.B. and Semmangudi. Which other violinist

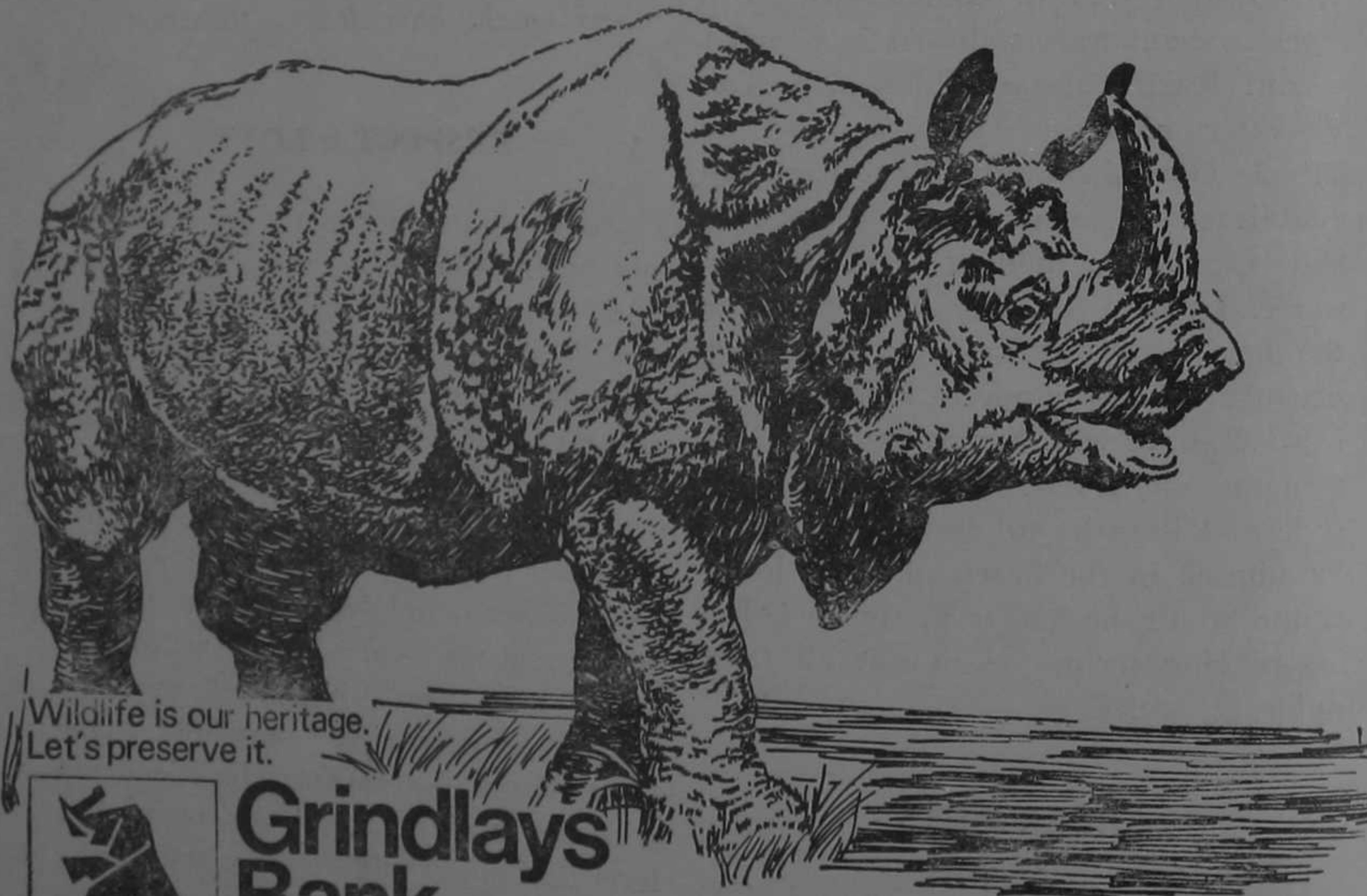


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would have the courage to suggest the raga or keerthanam that should follow by playing it on his violin? His understanding of the mood of the audience was remarkably empathic and an object lesson to aspiring artistes. His instrumental dialogue with Palghat Mani Iyer was a treat to hear.

Chowdiah bridged the gap between the old world violinists and the younger heroes of today like Lalgudi Jayaraman, T. N. Krishnan and M. S. Gopalakrishnan, to whom he paid unreserved tributes. To assess and appreciate his achievements as a violinist, one has to look to his colourless background. Born in a little known village in a poor family, destiny marked him out for greater glory. He became a self-made man and was respected by all. His close associates knew his magnanimity, piety and deep-rooted love for music. It was unsparing practice on all days that kept him in fine fettle at all times. There have been greater violinists than Chowdiah but none to match him for sheer tenacity and achievement.

## A FINE MEMORIAL

On the 15th of November 1980, the Governor of Karnataka inaugurated a unique building (auditorium) in the shape of a seven-stringed violin in the Gayathri Devi Park extension of Bangalore. People flocked in their thousands to participate in an enthusiastic manner in the throwing

open of this splendid monument to the memory of Mysore T. Chowdiah, by the son of one of the maestro's friend, philosopher and guide, the late K. Puttu Rao, advocate, Mysore. Mr. K. K. Murthi, in his capacity as the President of the Adademy of Music, used all his mental and monetary resources to raise the huge sum of rupees forty lakhs to build this tribute in marble, glass and, concrete to a great son of Karnataka, nay of India. Chowdiah's principal disciples were invited and honoured on the occasion. There was a grand violin recital by Lalgudi Jayaraman and party that evening.

The Chief Minister, Shri Gundu Rao, who is the Chairman of the Academy of Music, announced the conversion of the loan of Rs. 20 lakhs into a grant. He also agreed for the Sankey Tank Road overlooking the Hall being renamed as Chowdiah road. The widow of Chowdiah was promised a munificent monthly pension and a building site. One may well wonder whether in the history of the world there is a parallel memorial to an artiste, a musician at that. But those who have known 'Chowdiah', the magnificent man, are convinced that it is the best memorial that could be built to remind posterity about an outstanding artiste who lived a rich and fruitful life for 73 years and died on 19-1-1967, in harness. With more than fifty years to his credit as a leading violinist he was a staunch pillar to Karnatak music itself.



# The Cultural Scene in Karnataka

BY

T. B. NARASIMHACHAR

The last three decades have seen the birth of many organisations in Karnataka, catering to the needs of both the practitioners and lovers of fine arts. So far as Carnatic music is concerned, it is some of the district headquarters of the erstwhile state of Mysore, like Bangalore, Mysore, Tumkur, Hassan and Shimoga, that are nurturing it—more perhaps than even present day Madras. In particular, Bangalore leads the way, be it Drama, Dance or Music.

Every year begins in a mild way with the Aradhana celebrations of the Trinity and Purandaradasa (in recent years). These provide opportunities to many a budding amateur and aspiring professional to make his or her mark. The Rama Navami festival that follows provides a feast of music—mostly by leading artistes in the field—according to the resources of the organisers. To a certain extent, this has led to some heart-ache on the part of disappointed local musicians who feel that they are not accorded recognition on a par with visiting artistes, in respect of both opportunities and remuneration. But by and large, the organisers are guided by the public patronage accorded to these artistes as evaluated by attendance and gate receipts.

## FESTIVALS GALORE

Ganesha festival is the next major event for arranging music fiestas, week-long or fortnight long, with the same considerations as during Rama Navami festival weighing with the organisers for fixing artistes. In recent years, some

appeasement is afforded by arranging hour-long local junior concerts preceding the major concerts, but these are sparsely attended. Then there follow Sri Raghavendraswami Aradhana, Sri Krishna Jayanthi, and Ayyappa festivals on a minor scale, till one awaits the Annual Music Festival and Conference of the Bangalore Gayana Samaja (established in 1905).

## PLATINUM JUBILEE

1980 marked the seventyfifth year of the Samaja's existence. The occasion was celebrated with a ten-day music festival in which many of the leading stars of the music world participated. Sri Sandhyavandanam Srinivasa Rao, Principal, Music College of Music Academy, Madras, presided over this year's conference. Some eye-brows were raised at his choice but though he is domiciled in Madras his Karnatak antecedents cannot be denied and everything went off smoothly. A significant number of local vidwans were conspicuous by their absence both during the morning sessions of the Experts Committee and the Valedictory function (Sadas) on 2-11-'80 when Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale presided and conferred the title of 'Sangita Kala Ratna' on Srinivasa Rao on behalf of the Samaja.

A group of three ladies sang some compositions of Mysore Sadasiva Rao and Karur Dakshinamurthi Sastry. Lalitha Navile spoke about how the human voice should bring out the three sthayis but did not elucidate how this could be achieved by aspiring students.

Dr. S. Ramanathan spoke about the origin of 'Desyaragas' and their peculiar charm as ragas in currency in different parts of the country. He sang many songs in Desya ragas to illustrate his point, including 'Desya todi' (Tyagaraja's first composition 'NamoNamo Raghavya') and 'Ne pogadakunte' Dwijavanti and Senjuruti ('Kamalanayana Vasudeva').

In a lecture demonstration on the 'Veena tradition in Mysore' Sri B.V.K. Sastri, M. Chaluvayaswami, C. Krishnamurthi and V. Srikanta Iyer participated. M. A. Narasimhachar gave a brief talk about the compositional excellence of Mayuram Viswanatha Sastri's works. This was substantiated by the rendering of some select songs of Sastriar by the

latter's sister, Vallabham Kalyanasundaram. There was a group singing of some compositions in praise of Sri Ramana Maharshi by the Ramananjali group. Sri. K. S. Mahadevan, Editor, 'Shanmukha', who attended all the morning sessions, complimented the Samaja on its Platinum Jubilee and commended the good work it was doing in sustaining the interest of music lovers in this State by such conferences and music festivals. With the concluding remarks of the conference president, the six-day meet came to a successful close.

It was truly a grand climax to the Platinum Jubilee of a respected organisation in the music world of India.

## News & Notes

### The Music Academy

There is a regal solemnity about the inaugural and final sessions of the annual conferences of the Music Academy, Madras that somehow reminds us of great occasions. The 54th Annual Conference which began on 20th December '80 was no exception. The presence of the new Governor Shri Sadiq Ali, who exudes propriety and culture both in his remarks and in his demeanour, added considerably to the sanctity of the occasion. "Wholly unversed in the science and art of music", as he modestly claimed to be, the Governor noted that "Indian music has also a unifying and integrating role to play in the country".

Shri K.R. Sundaram Iyer, President of the Academy, is one of those father figures, rare in public life and rarer still in the world of Art. When George Washington wished to retire into private life, Jefferson urged him to continue and

observed: "There is sometimes an eminence of character on which society has such peculiar claims as to control the predilection of the individual for a particular walk of happiness and restrain him to that alone arising from the present and future benedictions of mankind". This is the condition of Shri KRS too.

He also typifies the truth that "When a man of energetic and upright character is appointed to a position of trust and authority, all who serve under him become, as it were, conscious of an increase of power". His colleagues on the Executive Committee, especially the indefatigable Executive Trustee Mr. S. Ramaswami, Mr. T.V. Rajagopalan, and the 4 Secretaries Viz., Messrs. R. Natarajan, R. Ranganathan, T.S. Parthasarathy and T.S. Rangarajan would readily concede this. The smooth functioning of the morning meetings of the Expert Committee, set apart for the reading of many



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valuable and illuminating papers and demonstrations, and the extremely competent and successful structuring and arranging of the large number of the afternoon, evening and night concerts were a creditable piece of planning and supervision. The huge crowds which thronged the TTK Auditorium day after day will be the first to acknowledge this.

### Prof T. N. Krishnan

Prof. T. N. Krishnan, the President of the Conference and recipient of the birudu "Sangitha Kalanidhi" conducted the Expert Committee meetings, lectures and demonstrations with such skill and aplomb as to ensure that more light than heat was produced at the discussions. Three points mentioned in his Presidential address were noteworthy:

(1) Overdoing vibrations of the notes reduces the value of the "sudha swaras". Excessive ornamentation should not be at the expense of rasa bhava.

(2) It is a fact that instrumentalists play a dominant role nowadays.

(3) Vocalists pay less attention to sruthi laya, bhava, voice culture and diction, although basically they have many advantages over the instrumentalist.

Prof. Krishnan also made commendable suggestions to the Academy such as taking steps to uplift the down-and-out musicians, evolving a group insurance scheme for them, having the mid-year series in different parts of the city and having a library of tapes and discs of good music. The chief merit of his suggestions was their practical bias. His feeling of concern for the less successful members of the profession was the more creditable since his own career has been totally free from want and drabness—in fact, he is the first Sangita Kalanidhi to receive the substantial C.V. Narasimhan Endowment of Rs. 3000/-.



Prof T. N. KRISHNAN

Successful musicians should never forget their less fortunate, though equally able, colleagues. They should have the humanity of the great Haydn who evinced the warmest feelings towards the then unknown, young genius Mozart. Haydn wrote:

"I wish I could impress on every friend of music and great men in particular, the same depth of musical sympathy and profound appreciation of Mozart's inimitable music, that I feel and enjoy; then nations would vie with each other to possess such a jewel within their frontiers. Prague ought not only to strive and retain this precious man, but also to remunerate him; for without this the history of a great genius is sad indeed. It enrages me to think that the unparalleled Mozart is not yet engaged by some imperial or Royal Court"

### Sri Krishna Gana Sabha

"Music is like earth, water, fire, air—a great basic element that belongs everywhere. Like bread and compassion, man can-



*not live without it*" So wrote Yehudi Menuhin, but no one is more keenly alive to this maxim than Shri R. Yegnaraman, the General Secretary of the Krishna Gana Sabha, who successfully and at very low cost to the Sabha is able to pack nearly three full-blooded Art festivals year after year. It is freely acknowledged by all musicians and artists that the service he is thus rendering to the cause of music is unsurpassed and the public too fully shares that view. The Sabha's 25th Art Festival included all the top artists in music, dance and drama and was inaugurated on 19th December 1980 by the Governor, Shri Sadiq Ali, who also presented the "Nriya Chudamani" birudu to Smt. Chitra Visweswaran, the eminent Bharat Natyam artiste. The function was brief and compact, from the Citation down to the felicitations. Of the latter, that of Dr. Padma Subramaniam was a gem of its kind, a correct mixture of courtesy to a fellow artist and perspicacity in analysing Smt. Chitra's *metier*. The music and dance festival of the Sabha was an unqualified success from a rasika's point of view as it provided the cream of classical music and dance.

#### **The Indian Fine Arts Society**

It was Michael Foot who said: "Sometimes a square peg fits into a square hole so neatly that the whole contraption seems to be of one piece". Sr. V. Emberumanar Chetty and the Indian Fine Arts Society are really "one piece". This egalitarian merchant prince, with his impeccable courtesy to all, self-effacing deportment and readiness to delegate the work to trusted lieutenants like the Secretaries Sri N. Ramachandran and Srinivasan, has really introduced a contemporary dimension into the art of successfully running a society dedicated to the fine arts without any fuss.

The 48th Conference of the IFAS was inaugurated by that erudite scholar, Mr. M. M. Ismail who just happens to be the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court and whose learned discourses will do great honour to a chair for Culture, in any of the great universities. In his inaugural, Mr. Ismail spoke of how the Thevaram and Prabhandams were so tuned as to touch the soul; and warmly congratulated the IFAS on its excellent role in fostering fine arts.

#### **Sri S. V. Sahasranamam**

The veteran actor, Sri S. V. Sahasranamam, was awarded the title of "Sangita Kala Sikhamani" by Mr. Ismail. Mr. D.V. Narayanaswami of the State Iyal Isai Nataka Manram, Dr. S. Ramanathan and Padmasri Lalgudi Jayaraman felicitated Sri SVS on this great honour. Sri Sahasranamam's presidential address was naturally nostalgic and among other things referred to his guru, Sankaradas Swami, the pioneer of drama troupes who grafted good music into stage craft. S. G. Kittappa, T.K. Shanmukham and N.S. Krishnan were his disciples. Such was the Swami's musical capability that the giant vocalist, Konerirajapuram Vaitha, used to render some of his songs in his marathon concerts. Mr. C. G. K. Reddy unveiled a portrait of A. Varadappa Chetty, who was closely connected with the IFAS. The programmes (both music and dance) were successful events. Dr. Semmangudi, Nedunuri Krishnamurthy, Madurai Somu, Flute N. Ramani, Jesudoss, Smt. Mani Krishnaswamy and others gave memorable concerts.

#### **Tamil Isai Sangam**

Dr. V. R. Nedunchezian, Finance Minister, Tamil Nadu, inaugurated the 38th Annual Festival of Tamil Isai Sangam over which Thiru Mi. Pa. Somasundaram,

the great Tamil Scholar and writer, presided. The title of "Isai Perarignar" was conferred on "Somu". His inaugural address was a treat to the mind. It contained a fascinating discussion of the relationship between art and Tamil literature. The music and dance festival comprised the top artists of the day, besides lovely interludes on Thevaram, Thiruppugazh etc. by acknowledged authorities.

#### **Papers and Demonstrations**

In all great music—and in all art for that matter—there is an element of tantalising elusiveness that disconcerts and baffles the practitioner. It is not easy to seize on the implications of great musical moments, as expressed through the masterpieces, and savour their vividness. Hence arises the value of practical demonstrations and discussions by those who know their subject well. It is perhaps a sign of the times that, at the music conferences held by the Academy, and the Indian Fine Arts Society, some brilliant and enlightening discourses and demonstrations were given. To mention the outstanding ones—Sri P.K. Rajagopala Iyer's learned discourse on Sama Veda, Dr. S. Seetha's demonstration of Graha, Amsa and Nyasa, B. Rajam Iyer's exposition of the classical handling of raga swarupa in Sahana, Saveri etc, Smt. Vidya Sankar's scintillating talk and demonstration of the evolution of the 22 srutis on the Veena, Prof. R. Satyanarayana's challenging talk on the advent of the violin in this country; also Mridangist Sivaraman's masterly description and demonstration of the evolution and exploitation of Mridangam as a concert percussion instrument; the wonderful dialogue between S. Rajam and Sri Narayan Joshi on common aspects of Carnatic Hindusthani ragas, (all the above at the Music Academy). At the IFAS, the President S.V. Sahasranamam's autobiographical memories of a life full of achievement and refinement as well as Bangalore H.P. Ramachar's scholarly demonstration on the Kanjira and Smt. Vijayanthimala's exposition on dance were extremely good. But the palm must go to Prof. S. R. Jankiraman's inspired and emotive exegesis of Walajapet Venkataramana Bhavathar's life and contribution to our existing knowledge of

Saint Tyagaraja's musical achievements, life etc.

Limitations of space preclude a detailed treatment of these demonstrations and discourses, which however we hope to cover in the next issue of "Shanmukha".

MR. R. VENUGOPAL WRITES:

In the sudden demise of P.N. Raghava Rao a few weeks ago, the world of music has lost a musician of great refinement and aesthetic perception who unswervingly conformed to pure Carnatic tradition in Raga delineation and rendering of the compositions of the masters. An avid learner to the end, he was also one of the best teachers of music with a capacity to kindle sound musical instincts even in very young children. Above all, he was a very suave, affable person with a very touching human quality, who shunned limelight out of a modesty which came naturally to him. To all music lovers and musicians, Raghava Rao's death is indeed a great loss.

\* \* \*

The concert of Shri Thanjavur Sankara Iyer held recently in the Sastri Hall in memory of K.J. Natarajan and Ranjani Natarajan, most painfully reminded music lovers of the void created by the premature deaths of these two people. "KJ" as Natarajan was affectionately called, had a deep insight into the soul of music - be it Carnatic, Hindustani or Western. His scholarship never impaired his aesthetic perception. True, he was a very selective listener and did not very much care for the average musician. The way he encouraged good music with a whole-hearted devotion, no body else could.

Ranjani who died very young displayed a maturity and musical appreciation far above her age. Her frail physical frame wasted by an incurable ailment, had strength enough only to sing. When she sang, a sweetness poured forth for which there was no match and she sang with a remarkable aesthetic refinement and precision which reflected all that is great in the music of her guru Shri Thanjavur Sankara Iyer.

Both "KJ" and Ranjani physically afflicted for several years lived only for music. Their close friends including several great musicians will miss them greatly.

KSM



## ஆராதனை செய்த ஆராதனை

நேரம் கிடைக்கும் பொழுது நினைப்பது என்பது பூஜை. மனிதர்களுக்கு இறைவனை காலையிலே நினைப்பதற்கு, கிடைக்கின்ற நேரம், பூஜை வேளை, அதாவது பூஜாகாலம். மாலைலே, வணங்கி தீப ஆராதனை செய்வதும் நமக்கு கடவுளை நினைப்பதற்கு கிடைக்கின்ற நேரம்.

கஷ்டம் வரும் பொழுது, எப்பொழுதாவது இறைவனை நினைப்பது என்பதும், என்னைக் காப்பாற்று என்பதும், "பிரார்த்தனை."

ஆயுள் உள்ளவரை எந்த நிமிஷமும், இறைவனாகிய ராமனை நினைத்துக் கொண்டே இருப்பது என்பது, திருவையாற்றில், தியாகப் பிரம்மத்திற்கு ஆராதனை. "அயோத்தி இராமன் வைகுண்டத்தில் இருந்து, எப்பொழுதும், என்னை நினைத்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறான். அவனை நினைப்பது எனக்கு அவனுடைய ஆராதனை. அவன் என்னை நினைப்பது அவன் செய்கின்ற ஆராதனை."

இதுதான், ஆராதனை செய்த ஆராதனை" என்று தியாகப்பிரம்மம், திருவையாற்றில் சொல்லிக் கொண்டிருந்தார்.

### பூஜை

தியாகராஜர் உதயகாலம் என்கின்ற காலையிலிருந்து அர்த்த ஜாமம் என்ற இரவு பன்னிரண்டு மணி வரை தனது வீட்டிலுள்ள ராம, லக்ஷ்மண, பரத, சத்ருக்ன, சீதா, ஹனுமத் சமேத பட்டா பிராம விக்ரகங்களுக்கு, நம்மைப் போன்று அல்லாமல், தினமும், ஆராதனையே, செய்து வந்தார். ஒரு நாள் ஆராதனை முடியும் வரை, ராமன் மீது பல கிர்த்தனங்களைப் பாடி முடித்து விடுவார். ஒரு முறை பாடி முடித்த துதிகளை, கிர்த்தனங்களை, மறுபடியும் தியாகராஜர் பாடுவதே கிடையாது. பாடியதை மறுபடியும், திரும்பப் பாடுகின்றவன் ஸாதகன், பயிற்சி செய்கிறவன். ராமபக்தி இல்லாததால், ஞான ஊற்று இல்லாதவன், சாத்திரத்தைக் கட்டிக் கொண்டு அழுகின்றவன் சங்கீதம் பாடுகின்றவன், வித்வான்.

### பக்தன்

ராமனை மாத்திரம் நினைத்து, முன்பு அவனை எப்படி நினைத்தேன் என்று, முன்பு நினைத்த கிர்த்தனங்களை மறுபடியும் நினைக்

காமல், அவனையே நினைத்துக் பாடிக்கொண்டு செல்லுகின்றவன் பக்தன்.

பக்தனுக்கு சங்கீதம் ஊற்று. அது இல்லாமல், பாடியதையே, பாட வேண்டும் என்கின்ற விற்பன்னர்களுக்கு, சங்கீதம் "ஒருகிண்டி தீர்த்தம்", என்று தியாகராஜர் தன் வீட்டில் பேசிக் கொண்டிருந்தார்.

### முன்று புலிகள்

ராகம் பாடுவதில் வல்லவர் ஒருவர் தியாகப்பிரம்மத்தின் வீட்டில் நுழைந்தார். ராக ஆலாபனையில் புலி என்று இவரை அழைப்பார்கள். ஸ்வரம், பாடுவதில், வல்லவரவான, வேறு ஒருவர், இவருடன் உள்ளே நுழைந்தார். இவரை, ஸ்வரப்புலி என்றும் அழைப்பார்கள். தாளம் பாடுவதில் வல்லவரான வேறு ஒருவர், இவர்களுடன், தியாகப்பிரம்மத்தைப் பார்க்க வந்திருந்தார். இவரை "லயப்புலி", என்று அழைப்பார்கள்.

சங்கீதம் ஒரு சாஸ்த்திரம். அந்த சாஸ்த்திரப்படியே, கீதங்கள் என்ற கிர்த்தனைகள், சங்கீதமாக அமைய வேண்டும், அல்லது அமைதல் வேண்டும், என்று எண்ணிய ஒரு சாஸ்த்திரப் புலியும், தியாகராஜருக்கு சங்கீத ஞானம், சாஸ்த்திர ஞானப்படி அமைந்த சங்கீத ஞானமா என்று கேட்டுத் தெரிந்து கொள்ள வந்திருந்தார்.

### பரீகை

ஒருமுறை பாடிய கிர்த்தனையை மறுபடியும் பாடாத தியாகராஜன், தன்னை பரீகைப்பதற்காக தன் வீட்டிற்குள் வந்தவர்களைப் பார்த்தார். வேண்டுமென்றே, பாடிய பாட்டை மீண்டும் பாடினார். அப்படி ராமனைப் பூஜையில் வைத்து இரண்டாவது முறையாக, பாடிய பாட்டு, "ஸங்கீத ஞானமு" . . . என்ற தன்யாசி ராக கிர்த்தனையே.

சங்கீத ஊற்றான தியாகராஜன் பாடிய பாட்டை மறுபடியும் பாடி, எப்பொழுது சங்கீத வித்வானானார் என்று நையாண்டி செய்தார் சாஸ்த்திரப்புலி. வயதிலே மூத்தவரான லயப்புலி "தியாகராஜா, உனக்கு பக்தி எப்பொழுது போனது? சங்கீத ஊற்று எப்பொழுது அடைபட்டது" என்றார்.

வந்தவர்களின் நையாண்டி ராம பக்தனான தியாகப் பிரம்மத்தின் காதுகளில் விழவே இல்லை. அவர்கள் கேட்க வந்த கேள்விகளுக்கு ராமன் சொன்ன பதில்களே, காதுகளில் விழுந்தன: தியாகராஜா, சங்கீத ஞானத்தைப் பற்றி எங்களுக்கு விளக்கக் கூடாதா?, என்ற கேள்வி, ராமனின் காதுகளில் விழுகிறது.

### பதில்கள்

பாடும் பொழுது, சுருதியிலிருந்து விலகாமல், சுருதியுடன் சேர்ந்தே இருப்பதைப் போன்று, ராமனின் நினைவை விட்டு விலகாமல், ராமனின் நினைவிலேயே இருக்கின்ற, எனக்கு சங்கீத ஞானத்தைப்பற்றி என்ன தெரியப்போகிறது?, என்று தியாகராஜனின் உதடுகள் முணுமுணுத்தன.

தியாகராஜா, சுருதிக்குப் பதில் கிட்டி விட்டது. ராக ஆலாபனைக்கு என்ன சாஸ்த்திரம்?

பக்தன் ராம நினைவிலே இருக்கும் பொழுது, மனம் சற்று விலகி, அவனது அழகை நினைப்பதே ராக ஆலாபனை, இந்த அவஸ்த்தையைத் தவிர எனக்கு வேறு என்ன தெரியும்? என்று சொன்ன தியாகராஜனின் ஆலாபனை அனைவரையும் பக்தியில் ஆழ்த்தியது.

கிர்த்தனைகளுக்கு என்ன சாஸ்த்திரம் தியாகராஜா? இந்தக் கேள்விக்கு நான் என்ன பதில் சொல்வேன்? சீதை அழகு தான், முத்து முத்தாகத்தான் இருப்பாள். ராம பக்தியில் வரும் கிர்த்தனைகள் முத்து, முத்துக்கள் தான். எல்லாமே, சீதைதான். அதற்கு சாஸ்த்திரமேது? என்றார் தியாகராஜர்.

### தாளம்

தாளத்தைப் பற்றி உனது அபிப்பிராயம் என்ன தியாகராஜா? என்ற கேள்விக்கு அவர் தாமதிக்கவே இல்லை. தப்புத்தாளம் போடுபவர்களுக்கும், சரியான தாளம் போடுபவர்களுக்கும், லக்ஷ்மணனின் அனுக்கிரகம் பூரணமாக இருக்கிறது. ஏன் தெரியுமா?

ராமனோடு கருத்து மாறுபாடு ஏற்படும் உரிமை என்பதே லக்ஷ்மணனுக்குத்தான்.

லக்ஷ்மணன் ராமனோடு பல விஷயங்களில், ஒத்துப் போனவர்தான். அப்போதெல்லாம், தாளத்தோடு சங்கீதம் என்று சரியாக இருந்தார். ராமனின் பேச்சுக்கு, லக்ஷ்மணன் மாறுபடும் பொழுதெல்லாம், இவர் அவருக்கு தப்புத்தாளம் தானே என்றார் தியாகராஜர். கலையை இறைவனோடு ஒப்பிடும் தியாகராஜன், தப்புத்தாளத்திற்கு புதிய வியாக்கியானம் செய்கிறானென்றும் வியந்தனர். ஸ்வரம் பாடுகிறார்களே, அதற்கு என்ன சாஸ்த்திரம் என்றார் மற்றொருவர். ராமப் பிரம்மத்தைப் தரிசனம் செய்தவுடன், ஞானிகள் குதூகலிக்கிறார்களே, அதுதான் பாடும் பொழுது வந்து விழுகின்ற, "ஸ்வரம்" என்றார் தியாகராஜர்.

### மூவர்

சாஸ்த்திரக் கேள்விகளுக்கெல்லாம் பிரம்ம லக்ஷணம் சொன்னீர்களே! பரதன், சத்ருக்னன், ஆஞ்சனேயன், இவர்களை சாஸ்த்திரத்தில் எங்கு வைக்கப் போகிறீர்கள் என்றார் வேறு ஒருவர்.

ராமனையே எண்ணுகின்ற பரதனைப் போன்று, ராகத்தை அந்த ராக பாவத்தோடு பாடுகின்றோம், என்று எண்ணுகின்ற "ராக பாவமே" பரதன் என்றார். சத்ருக்னன்? பாவ, ராகத்தோடு, இணைகின்ற தாளம், என்றார் தியாகராஜர்.

"ஆஞ்சனேயர், இவர் எங்கே வருகிறார் சங்கீத சாஸ்த்திரத்தில்", என்றார் மற்றொருவர். ராம பக்தனாக, பூலோகத்தில் பிறந்து, ராமனை, ஆராதனை செய்ய வேண்டுமென்றால், மனிதனுக்கு பிறப்புதான் முதலில் வேண்டும். அந்தப் பிறப்பை, ஆஞ்சனேயன் எனக்கு அருளியதால் தான், திருவாரூரில் பிறந்து, திருவையாற்றில், ராம ஆராதனை செய்கிறேன் என்றார் தியாகராஜர்.

பிராணன் என்ற மூச்சை ஆஞ்சனேயனுக்கு ஒப்பிடும் பொழுது, நாம் கேட்ட கேள்வி, தவறு என்று அங்கு அனைவரும் உணர்ந்தனர்.

நேரூர் சதாசிவ பிரம்மேந்திரர்.



## Some Typical 'Dhatus' of Karnataka Devar Namas

A few typical Dhatus (varnamettukkal or tunes) of Devar Namas of Sri Purandara Dasa and other saints of Dasakoota are mentioned here. The songs are simple but they have an unadorned beauty. Dasar Padagalu are remarkable for their ready appeal—both of the Sahitya and Sangeetha. You find Savalatha, Sowlabhya and musical quality of lasting worth that calls for little change;—nay, they do not brook any change. Being simple, lovely lyrics, the devotional songs are easy to learn, easy to sing.

But alas—only these popular songs are available. Creations of art music like Sooladis, Thayam, Lakshana Geethams and Varnams have not come down in Karna Paramapara in their entirety. Only a few Sooladis and Geethams with notation are available. Even these have not been in vogue. All the rich musical creations are irretrievably lost. Only Sahitya is left. To conduct research into compositions having only the Sahitya appears to be a wholly wasteful exercise. By lakshana, forgotten Raga forms can never be reconstructed. This research is like seeking the petals of Akasa Kusumam. Songs whose music is not handed down have only a literary value and musically, they are dead pieces.

The primary aim and purpose of these Devarnamas were to inculcate Gnana, Bhakti, Vairaggya. They are all set in simple tunes in Prasiddha Ragas and the simple talas: Adi, Rupakam, Jhampe and Tripata. Even as reading Valmeeki helps one to pick up Sanskrit easily, learning to sing Devarnamas will give a basic training and the ear for classical music, by familiarising us with the Raga Roopa. These Dasar padas portray the ragas in simple, elegant and attractive phrases,

abounding in broad and basic features of ragas.

Most of the Padas are set in 'key' tunes, typical and characteristic of the Raga. In each one of these tunes, hundreds of songs could be rendered. In those good old days when radio, printed books, gramophone records and other facilities were lacking, this system of enshrining songs of great didactic and philosophic import helped to awaken the masses to an amazing degree.

### SIMPLE SONGS

Men, women and children - all can learn to sing a few of these simple songs. They are simple but if rendered by vidwans or others who have undergone good training, the circle of rasikas would be greatly enlarged. This will create a good ear for music. But the songs must be rendered with sublime simplicity to which Rabindra Nath Tagore refers in Geethanjali in a song—"that training is the most intricate which leads to the utter simplicity of a tune".

These tunes are gathered from lay people of the Madhva community who have no knowledge of swaras and ragalakshanas, but learnt them from their ancestors by sravana. I learnt many of them in my infancy at Anantapur from my parents and other Dasakoota singers. About the authenticity, a word. When a Devarnama is rendered in the same raga and tune by people in far-flung places like Ananthapur, Kumbhakonam, Vijayanagaram, Mysore and Tirunelvely—they can be accepted as authentic.

PROF. SANDHYAVANDANAM  
SRINIVASA RAO.

## க்ருதி

### ஸ்ரீ நாத ஜ்யோதி ஸ்ரீமுத்துஸ்வாமி தீக்ஷிதரின் தசாவதார கீர்த்தனைகள்

(ராக மாலிகை)

#### 1. ராகம் - நாட்டை

மா கா மா பா ; ; || ப ம க ம ரீ ; ; ஸா ||  
மா - த வோ || மா - - ம் பா து ||  
ஸ நி த நி ஸா ; ; ஸா || ப நி ஸ் நி ப ம க ம ரீ , ஸ ||  
ம - - - த்ஸ்யா வ || தா - - - - - ரோ - ||  
க ம பா த நி ஸ் ரீ ஸ் ஸ் நி || ஸ்ம் க்ம் ரி ஸ் நி பா நி ப ||  
வே - த ஸ்தே - யதுஷ்டஹர || வே - தா திர க்ஷ ண ஸ்ரீ - ||  
ஸ்வரம்

ஸா ; ; ரீ கா மா || பா மா பா ஸா நீ ஸா ||  
ரீ ; ஸா ஸா நீ பா || மா மா பா மா ரீ ஸா ||  
ஸா நி ப நி ஸ ரி க ம ப த நி || ஸ் ரி க் ம ரி ரி ஸ் நி ப ம ப நி ||  
ஸ் ரீ ஸா நி ஸ் நி ப ம க ம || ப நீ பா ம ப க ம ரி ஸ நி ||

#### 2. ராகம் - கௌளை

கா மா ரீ ; ஸா ; || நீ பா ; நீ ஸா ; ||  
கோ - விந் த ம் || ந மா ம்யஹம் ||  
ரீ பா மா கா மா ரீ || நீ , பா ம க ம ரி ஸா ரி ||  
கு ரு கு ஹ மு த || கூ ர்மா வதா - - ரம். ||  
மா ப நீ ஸா ரி க்ம் ரி ஸ் || , நி - ஸா நீ ப மா க ம ரி ||  
தேவராஜாதிபூ - ஜிதம் || - - திவ்யாம்ருத ப்ரதம். - ||  
ஸ்வரம்

ரீ ; ; மா பா நீ || பா மா பா நீ ஸா ரீ ||  
கா மா ரீ ஸா ; நீ || ரீ ஸா நீ நீ பா மா ||  
ரீ ப ம க ம ரி ஸ ரி ம ப நி || ஸா ரி ப்ம் க்ம் ரி ஸ் நி ஸ் ரி ||  
க்ம் ரி ஸா நி ரி ஸ் நி பா ம || ஸ நி ப நி ப ம ப ம க ம ரி ஸ ||

#### 3. ஸ்ரீராகம்

ரீ கா ரீ ரீ ; ஸா || நீ ; பா நீ ; ஸா ||  
ஸ்ரீ - த ரே ண || ர க்ஷி தோ ஹம் ||  
பா ; தா நீ பா மா || ரீ கா ரீ ரீ ; ஸா ||  
பூ மி பா - ல || ஸா - க ரே ண ||  
க ரி நீ ஸா ப மா பா ப || ரி ஸா நி ப நி ப ம ரி க ரி ஸ ||  
ஹி த தே வோ ப கா ரே ண || ஹ யா ஸு ர ஹ த நிபுணே - ன ||  
ஸ்வரம்

ரீ ; ; பா மா ரீ || ரீ கா கா ரீ ஸா நீ ||  
ஸ ; ; ரீ மா பா || நீ நீ பா மா பா நீ ||  
ஸ் ரா ரி நி ஸ் ப நி ம ப நி ஸ் நி || பா நி ம ப ரி ம ஸ ரி ம ப நி ||  
ஸ் ரீ க் ரி ஸ் நி ஸா ரி ஸ் நி || க் ரீ ஸ் நி ப ரி ஸா நி ப ம ||

#### 4. ராகம் - ஆரபி

ஸா ரீ ஸா ; மா கா || ரீ ஸா ரீ ; ஸா ; ||  
ந ர ஸிம் மா - || ய ந ம ஸ்தே ||  
ஸ் ரா ; தா ; பா ; || யா ; மா-மா கா ரீ ||  
ப்ர ஹ்லா த || ப்ரா , ர்த்திதா - ய ||



ம தா பா ம க ரி ஸ ரீ ம || ப த ஸ் ரீ ஸ் த த ப ம க ரி ||  
ஹிரண் ய ப்ரா - ண ஹ ரா ய || ஹரி ஹ யாதி வந் - திதா - ய ||  
ஸ்வரம்

ஸா ; ; ரீ ஸா நீ || தா ஸா ரீ மா பா தா ||  
பா ; ; மா கா ரீ || ஸா ரீ ஸா ஸா நீ தா ||  
ஸ ரி ம ப தா ரி ம ப த ஸ்ா || ம ப த ஸ்ா ரி ஸ் ரி ம் க் ரீ ||  
ஸ் ரி ஸ் ஸா ஸ் ப த ப பா ப || ஸ ஸ ப ப ஸ் நி த ப ம க ரி ஸ ||

#### 5. ராகம் - வராளி

பா மா தா பா ; மா || கா ; ரீ ; ; ஸா ||  
வா - ம நா - || தந் யம் ந ||  
தா நீ ஸா ; ரீ கா || ரீ ஸா கா ரீ கா மா ||  
ஜா - நே ந ர || வ ர ரூ - பி னே ||  
பா ர த ப ம பா , த நி ஸ் || ம் க்ா ரீ ஸ்ாநி த த ப ம ||  
கக் ர பவிரா ஜா - தி || ச்ருதி க்ஞானப்ரபோ - தி னே ||  
ஸ்வரம்

பா ; ; மா பா மா || கா கா ரீ ஸா நீ ஸா ||  
கா ரீ கா மா பா தா || பா மா கா கா ரீ ஸா ||  
ஸ ரி ஸ பா ம த ப ம ப த நி || ஸ் ரி ப் ம் க்ா ரி ரி ஸ் நி ஸ் ரி ||  
ஸ் க் ரி ஸ்ா நி ஸ் நி த பா ம || க நி த பா ம ப ம க ரி க ம ||

#### 6. ராகம் - கேதாரம்

பா ஸ்ா நீ பா ; மா || கா ரீ ஸா ரீ ஸா ; ||  
ப ர ச ரா ம || ஸ்ய ப - க்தோ ||  
க ரி ஸா ஸ நி பா ஸா ; || க ரி ஸா ரி ஸ் நி ப நி பா ம ||  
ஹம் - - ஸீ - - தா || ப - தி சரணு - கதஸ்ய ||  
பா ஸ் நி ஸ்ஸ் ம்ா க் ரீ ஸ் ஸ்நி || க் ரி ஸ்ா நி பா நி ப ம ||  
க்ஷத்ரியகுல பீ கரஸ்ய || ஜமதக்னி ரிஷிபு த்ர - ஸ்ய ||  
ஸ்வரம்

பா ; ; மா கா ரீ || மா கா ரீ ஸா ; நீ ||  
பா ; ; நீ ஸா மா || கா மா பா நீ ஸ்ா - ம்ா ||  
க்ா ம் ப் ம் க்ா ரி ஸ் நி ப நி || ஸ் ரி க் ஸ்ா நி ப ஸ் நி பா ம ||  
க் ரி ஸ ரி ரிகா ஸ ஸா ; || , ரி ஸ் நி ப ம க க ரி ஸ க ம ||

#### 7. ராகம் - வஸந்த

ஸா ரீ ஸா மா கா மா || த நி ஸ் நி தா மா தா நீ ||  
ரா - ம சந் - த்ர || ஸ்வா - - - மி னி ப - ||  
தா மா கா ரீ ; ஸா || நீ தா மா கா , ம க ரி ||  
க்திம் - க ரோ மி || ஹ ரி ஹ ரா த்மனி - ||  
ஸ ம க ம த ம தா நீ ஸ்ஸ் || ம் க் ரி ஸ் நி த நி த ம க ரி நி ||  
த ச ர த ஸுகு மா ராத்மனி || த ச வ த ன பஞ் - சநா - த்மனி ||  
ஸ்வரம்

ஸா ; ; மா கா மா || தா மா கா மா தா நீ ||  
ஸ்ா ; ; ரீ ஸா நீ || தா நீ தா மா கா ரீ ||  
ஸா ம க ரி ஸ க ம த நி ஸ் ம் || க்ா ரி ஸ் நி க் ரி ஸ் நி த ரி ஸ் ||  
நித நி ஸ் நி த ம க ம த நி ரி || ஸ் நி த ம க ம த ம க ரி ஸ நி ||

#### 8. ராகம் - ஸுரடி

பா மா ம க ம பா ம ரீ || பா நீ தா பா நி த ப ம ||  
ப ல ரா - - - - ம || மா - ம் க ல - ய - ||  
பா ஸ்ா நீதா பா மா || ப ம க ம ரி ஸ நி ஸ ரீ மா ||  
போ - கி சா - யி || ஸோ - - - - த - ர - ||  
ப ம ரீ க ம ரி ஸ நீ த நி || ஸ்ா ரி ம் ரி ஸ் நி த நி த ப ம ||  
முரளீ கா - னு - னந்தமு || குந்தா - தி ஸதா - லோ - ல - ||

ஸ்வரம்

ரீ ; ; மா ரீ மா || பா ; ; நீ ஸ்ா ரீ ||  
ஸ்ா ; ; ஸா நீ தா || பா பா மா மா ரீ ஸா ||  
ரீ ம ப நி த ப ம ரி ஸ நி ஸ || ரீ ம ப நி த ரி ஸ் நி த ப நி ||  
ஸ் ரி ம் க் ப் ம் ரீ ஸ் நி த நி || ஸ் நீ த ப மா க ரி ஸ ரி ம ||

#### 9. ராகம் - ஸௌராஷ்ட்ரம்

ரீ ஸா ஸா நீ தா நி த பா ; || ப ம க ம ரீ - ஸா ரீ ஸா ||  
ஸ்ரீ - க்ரு - - - - - ஷ்ணம் || ப - ஐ - ரே சி - த்த ||  
ஸா நீ ; தா ; நீ || ஸா ரீ கா மா பா தா ||  
ஸ்ரீ - ரூ க்மி || ணீ - - ப திம் - ||  
ஸ்நி ஸ்ா ரி ம் க் ரீ ரி ஸ் ரி || ஸ்ா நி தா ப நி த ப ம ப த ||  
சிசு பால கம் - ஸாதிஹரம் || பாண்டவாதிர - ஸ்ரீதவரம் ||

ஸ்வரம்

பா ; ; மா கா ரீ || ஸா ; ; நீ ஸா ரீ ||  
கா ; ; மா பா தா || நீ ஸ்ா ரீ ஸ்ா தா ; ||  
ப ம க ரி ஸ ரி க ம ப த நி ஸ் || ம் க் ரி ஸ்ா ரி ஸ் நி த நி ஸ் ரி ||  
ஸ் நீ தா ப ம கா ரி ஸ ரி || ஸ நீ தா நி ஸ ரி க ம ப த ||

#### 10. ராகம் - மத்யமாவதி

ப நி ஸ் நி பா மா ரீ ஸா || ஸ நி பா நீ ஸா ரீ மா ||  
க - லி - யு க வ ர || வே - ங்க டே - சம் ||  
பா மா பா நீ ; ஸா || ரீ ஸ்ா நீ ஸ்ா ; ரீ ||  
க ல ஸ மூ ஹ || ஹ த ஸு ரே சம் ||  
நி ப ரீ ஸ் ரி ம் ரீ ஸ் - ரீ || ஸ் நீ ப நி பா ம ரி ஸ ரி ம ||  
அலமேலு மங்கேச - ம || ச்யுதாதி ப ஜேஹு மனிசம் - ||

ஸ்வரம்

ஸா ; ; ரீ ஸா ரீ || ஸா நீ பா நீ ஸா ரீ ||  
ரீ ; ; ஸா ரீ மா || பா நீ பா மா ரீ ஸா ||  
நீ ஸ ரி ப ம ரி ஸ ரி ம ப நி || ஸ்ா ரி ஸ் நி ப ம ப நி ஸ் ரீ ||  
ஸ் ரி ம் ரீ ப் ம் ரி ஸ் நி ப நி || ஸ் ரி ஸ் நீ ப நி ப ம பா நி ||

ஸௌராஷ்ட்ரம்

ஸ் நீ தா ப ம கா ரி ஸ ரி || ஸ நீ த நி ஸ ரி க ம ப த நி ||

ஸுரடி

ஸ் ரி ம் க் ப் ம் ரீ ஸ் நி த நி || ஸ் நி த ப மா க ரி ம ப ஸ ||

வஸந்த

நி த நி ஸ் நி த ம க ம த நி ரி || ஸ் நி த ம க ம த ம க ரி ஸ ஸ ||

கேதாரம்

க ரி ஸ ரி ரிகா ஸ ஸா ; || , ரி ஸ் நி ப ம க கா ம ப நி ||

வராவி

ஸ் க் ரி ஸ்ா நி ஸ் நி த பா ம || க நி த பா ம க மா ப த நி ||

ஆரபி

ஸ் ரி ஸ் ஸா ஸ் ப த ப பா ப || ஸ ஸ ப ப ஸ் நி த ப ம ப த ரி ||

ஸ்ரீராகம்

ஸ் ரீ க் ரி ஸ் நி ஸ்ா ரி ஸ் நி || க் ரீ ஸ் நி ப ம பா நி ஸ் ரி ||

கௌளை

க் ம் ரி ஸ்ா நி ரி ஸ் நி பா ம || ஸ் நி ப நி ப ம ப ம ரி ம ப நி ||

நாட்டை

ஸ் ரீ ஸ்ா நி ஸ் நி ப ம க ம || ப நீ பா ம ப க ம ரி ஸ நி ||

(மாதவோ)

கூபம்

[கல்லிடைக்குறிச்சி ஸங்கீத கலாநிதி - ப்ரும்மஸ்ரீ வேதாந்த பாகவதர் அவர்கள்  
சிஷ்யர் K. H. மகாதேவ பாகவதர் கொடுத்து உதவியது.]



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## “Sitarama Vijayam”

Thyagaraja's Opera

From the assiduous researches of Prof. P. Sambamurthy who had access to the Walajapet collection of Saint Thyagaraja's palm leaf manuscripts and note books preserved in the Sourashtra Sabha (as early as in May 1937) the music world came to know that in addition to “Nowka Charitram”, and “Prahladha Bakthi Vijayam”, the Saint had also written an opera called “Sitarama Vijayam” which relates to the “Uttara Ramayana”. Though the bare text of this opera was published in 1868 by Lokha Narayana Sastrulu in Madras, not a single copy of it is now available. Conclusive evidence by scholars and researchers reveals that this was the first opera to be attempted by the great composer. Prof. Sambamurthy expresses the view that after writing this opera, the idea occurred to him that he must write an opera pertaining to an avatar prior to Ramavatar and an opera subsequent to Ramavatar. The result was “Prahladha Bakthi Vijayam” and “Nowka Charitram”. Prof. Sambamurthy who was the first to peruse some of the Wallajapet Collections from K.K. Ramaswami Bhagavatar, son of Wallajapet Krishnaswami Bhagavatar (son of Venkatramana Bhagavatar) in a statement in The Hindu, 10th May 1937 said: “Another note book containing stray notes on the “Life of Thyagaraja” written by K.K. Ramaswami Bhagavatar. Circumstances that led to the Composition of the opera, “Sita Rama Vijayam” are detailed here.)

### Palam Leaf Ms.

The recent discovery of a palm leaf manuscript in a collection by a Tamil Scholar in Madurai throws light on this missing opera. The manuscript mentions about this opera and also the Kriti contained in it which might arouse the curiosity of researchers and scholars of Thyagaraja lore. Some of the kriti of

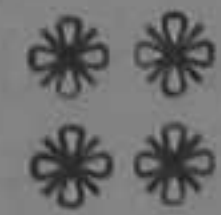
this opera have found a place in the repertoire of musicians decades ago without their being aware that they belonged to this opera. The kriti “Ma Janaki” belongs to “Sitarama Vijayam”. It is sung by a Character addressing Rama thus: “Oh. Rama! You attained this greatness of being called Ravanari, because you married our Sita. If the lokamata had so desired, she could have reduced Ravana to ashes by her mere thought. But, she patiently bore the insults and stayed in Asoka Vana”. On the eve of the performance of Asvamedha Yaga, Rama gives his brother Satrugna a long sermon on Yuddha Dharma (ethics of battle) prior to his departure with the horse. Rama said that he (Satrugna) must not fight an enemy during night-time; that he must not kill an enemy when the latter is sleeping. Lakshminidhi, a fictitious character and a brother-in-law of Sri Rama accosts Rama in a sarcastic manner “As if you yourself practised these Dharmas! How did you kill Vali? What was the justification for killing Tataki?”

Those who had listened to Dr. Srinivasa Raghavan's “Bhahula Panchami” Celebrations would be familiar with the Kriti “Vanaja nayanudani” in Kedaragowla raga, Aditala, though he was not aware that it belonged to this opera. It has a majestic lilt even at the commencement. It is addressed to Sita by her Saki, when Sita is made to go to the forest on a flimsy remark by an insignificant person during the reign of Rama, after his Coronation. It is a moving song and Rama is rebuked for his adamant attitude. We can hear this Kriti in its authentic version even today from the Doctor's disciples Sri. S. Parthasarathy (Violin) and Mrs Ranaganayaki Parthasarathy (Veena).

N. R. BHUVARAHAN.



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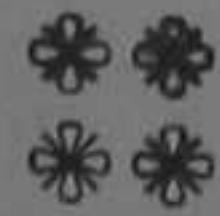


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## **“Sindu Isai” FOLK SONGS**

Speaking of the techniques of ornamentation, Peggy Holroyde in her book *The Music of India* says: “Like the stonemason working on a piece of sculpture, the Indian can use all manner of small devices to perfect his form” (Italics mine). It is this perfection of form and the “liquidity” of sound in it that is such an integral part of that huge repertory of folk songs which compendiously is called “Sindu Isai”—comprising “Kavadi Chindu”, “Nondi Chindu” etc.

On 1st January 1981, All India Radio broadcast a scintillating programme of “Sindu Isai” under the national programme of Regional Music. These soul-stirring, simple melodies embody the emotional ecstasies of pious people and men of wisdom; and even if one disregards their varied metrical structures—to suit folk dance forms and appeal—they are so sweet on the ear. The simplicity of the diction, the lilt of the tune, have an immediate impact.

Time was when these simple folk songs formed part of the everyday lives of peasants and village folk. The themes, religious and otherwise, perhaps relieved the monotony of work while the metrical form actually assisted the rhythm of working. The Indian genius had thus evolved a system of folk songs that contained in itself the enjoyment of work and the means of lessening its tedium.

But, alas, like many other national

distinctions, this great art has of late, fallen into desuetude. (The migration of the people from villages to towns has perhaps something to do with it) And only in the rear-guard processions of temple deities or similar occasions could one hear these soul-stirring melodies. It is, therefore, very gratifying that A.I.R. broadcasted such a beautifully arranged programme of “Sindu Isai” in which leading lights like Dr. S. Ramathan, T. M. Soundararajan, P. Sushila, Papanasam Vijayalakshmi, Rajeswari took part.

The more commendable aspects of the featuring of this programme were the fine selection of themes from the songs of Ramalinga Swamigal, Gopalakrishna Bharathi, Chennikulam Annamalai Chettiar and others on the one hand and on the other, the raga moulds in which they were cast, such as Punnagavarali, Husseini, Chenjuruti, Mukhari, etc., as well as the rhythmic varieties embracing thisram, misram, kandam in the talas adopted. The background ensemble put in a creditable performance and the whole programme made one feel not only that “heard songs are Sweet”, but “those unheard (these days) are sweeter”. Full marks to Sri T. K. Govinda Rao the Producer and the staff of A.I.R. for this excellent show. May one hope that public interest in this price-less heritage will be revived by these programmes?

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